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REVIEW REVUE P. 45

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ON YOUR LIST P. 13

the Stranger

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VOL. 25, NO. 16
DECEMBER 16-22, 2015
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the Stranger

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BY TINSEL DICKINSON

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WE SAW YOU

STRANGER STAFFERS WERE THERE AS IT HAPPENED



DISAPPEARING CHRISTMAS TREE *On the Nordstrom awning.*

MYSTERY OF THE MINI XMAS TREE

We saw you, a tiny Christmas tree, on one of the beams of the new awning under construction outside Nordstrom the first day of December. A week later, you were gone, so we asked a Nordstrom spokesperson where you'd gone, and he told us he had no idea what we were talking about. When we sent him this picture, he explained that iron workers on construction sites have "a tradition that when they install the last beam or top off a project, they put a tree on the crane or on the actual beam. It's called 'topping out.'" Wikipedia traces the origins of "topping out" to "the ancient Scandinavian religious rite of placing a tree atop a new building to appease the tree-dwelling spirits displaced in its construction." Nordstrom's spokesperson says the store "is undergoing a significant, multi-floor, two-year remodel inside and out that's scheduled to be completed next spring. The exterior facade was one part of the project and included repair to some of the limestone, removal of the old dark canvas awning, and

a new glass awning installed." The last time we walked by, there was no glass awning yet, and no tree, but tons of construction workers climbing around, and when we asked one of them what had happened to the tree, he said, "I don't know what happened to it."

SPEAKING OF AWNINGS

You were reclining beneath the awnings of the old Value Village on Capitol Hill with some homeless people, surrounded by tattered piles of belongings. You appeared to have just woken up. "I've got my lighter stuck up my ass crack," you told your associates, grinning.

PRETTY LOUD IN PIONEER SQUARE

Around 4 p.m. on a Wednesday, you sat with a pen and a legal pad at a table in a Pioneer Square coffee shop. It's unclear if you realized it was quiet enough in there to overhear other tables' conversations. "That fucktard won't take a meeting with us," you said—emphatically and without the shame you should have felt using that word—to the woman

GUEST EDITORIAL

If You Think Being Michael Douglas's Best Friend Is So Easy, Why Don't You Try It?

by Dale Erskine (Michael Douglas's Best Friend, 2001–2007)

I can well imagine what you must be thinking: This guy was best friends with Michael Douglas, international screen legend, for six years? What does he have to complain about?!

Believe me, you do NOT want to know.

Listen, don't get me wrong. Michael is an incredible guy: great husband, great father, great actor, great humanitarian. The whole schmear, as we used to say in New York (where I'm from). You may have noticed the one category I left off that list. That's right. Because when you're Michael Douglas's best friend, it's a full-time job. And not a two-way street.

Were there times he would call just to say, "Hey, Dale, what's shakin'?" Of course there were. But after six years of being his best friend, I could always tell when what he really wanted was for me to ask him how he was doing, or tell him how beautiful (and not too young for him) his wife was, or congratulate him on beating cancer, or reassure him that he was still a Hollywood Hall of Famer (his term) even though he hadn't had a really big hit in at least a decade. Then that Liberace movie happened (still haven't seen it, btw), and suddenly it's "Oh, dude, sorry I didn't text you back. My phone's being weird."

What do you take me for, man?

Sometimes I wonder how Michael is doing. I truly hope he's genuinely happy. And I hope he has found a new best friend who doesn't mind being taken for granted. But that's not me. Not anymore.



across the table from you. "Yes, he's officially a fucktard."

RIP, BAUHAUS

Last Friday morning, you and your dog (a Westie, by the looks of him) stopped in for a coffee at the Bauhaus in Ballard. As you waited in line, one of the employees approached with a handful of treats, which he gave out quite liberally, along with head scratches and belly rubs, to your dog. Before you could place your order, the woman working the register asked simply, "Quad split shot?" Then another barista began making your drink. You said you were just stopping in for coffee and didn't have time to stay, but after all three employees asked you to stick around for a while, you relented. It was just two days before the cafe closed permanently and, like seemingly everyone else in there, you wanted to make the most of the time you had left.

BUSTING MOVES AT THE BLUE MOON

You were the middle-aged guy with stringy blond hair busting very good *Soul Train*-like moves at the Blue Moon Tavern to Eugene Chadbourne's version of Roger Miller's 1965 country hit "King of the Road." It might have been the greatest musical non-sequitur/incongruity we've ever seen.

SO SORRY, SOLE REPAIR

On a rainy Saturday night, we walked into Sole Repair, a private event space on Capitol Hill, where we encountered you, a group of roughly 10 dark-haired young ladies between the ages of 8 and 13, all wearing party

dressess. Walking through the front door of Sole Repair deposited two of us—dripping in rain jackets and looking like wet shaggy dogs—straight into the middle of a dance floor, where you girls were moving freely, smiling wildly, and, from the looks of it, about to get turned up with some hula-hoops. Our arrival was a classic "record scratch moment" (which perhaps none of you understand, since you're all too young to know what records are), with the action of the dance floor coming to an abrupt halt and a few of you throwing us some excellent facial expressions that unmistakably said, "WTF are you doing here?" It was then we realized that the bouncer outside had not been joking when he asked us if we were there for the bar mitzvah, and that the surprise birthday we thought we were arriving at was in a totally different venue. In any case, mazel tov! And sorry about momentarily crashing your dance party!

SEVEN SANTAS OUTSIDE SIX ARMS

Last Saturday around 9 p.m., the city was crawling with Santas, including your group of seven Santas outside the Six Arms, five of you seeming to be women. One of you announced to your friends, "The lightbulbs are in my boobs." Indeed, you had Christmas lights snaking in and out of your clothes. Everyone was wearing red-and-white-striped socks, and one of you had red ornaments hanging from your beard. A young man walking by just then, wearing a black jacket and blue jeans, turned to the person he was walking with and said, "I feel like it's one week too early for Santa parties." ■

I, ANONYMOUS

FUCK YOU, FUCK YOU, THANK YOU

To all you jerks cutting in line for I-5 on the West Seattle Bridge. What, you're more important than everybody else? You know goddamn well you need to be in the left fucking lane. So you stop in the right lane with your left turn signal on and wait for someone to let you in as traffic stacks up behind you? Fuck you. Just fuck you.

—Anonymous

I was trying to cross the already-deadly-for-pedestrians Elliott Avenue, waiting dutifully for the walk signal. You and your logo'd-out bicyclist buddy knowingly blew the red light because you were clearly too *in the zone* to obey traffic signals. When you nearly took me out in the crosswalk, you yelled, "I will hit you!" You're a real credit to your sport. I no longer wonder why nonriders fucking hate bikes so often.

—Anonymous



To the young man who halted the 49 bus during Friday morning rush hour to chase after me and return my ORCA card: You are my hero. I did not adequately thank you for saving me from the embarrassment of stepping onto my transfer without the proper funds. So thank you, Returner-of-Dropped-Property-Man. Seattle's buses are more pleasant to ride because of you.

—Anonymous

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Now Is the Time to Start Fighting for Better Light Rail in Seattle

Who to Call and E-mail to Get the Mass-Transit Route You Want

BY HEIDI GROOVER

Here's the good news: Seattle is done fighting over whether light rail is a smart idea or not. Voters like light rail. Our choked streets demand big investments in mass transit. Political leaders realize we can't welcome a million new residents to the region by 2040 without it. And everyone's cluing in to the fact that the challenge of spiking rents and rising income inequality can't be addressed without giving people a cheap, efficient way to travel from the still-affordable parts of this region to its increasingly expensive urban centers.

With that settled, the fight now is about *how* and *where* to build the next light-rail lines. Less than a year from now, in November 2016, a massive tax measure to build a bunch of new Sound Transit routes is going to appear on your ballot. You'll get to make a simple choice: yes or no. But if you want to weigh in on the more complex question of where those light-rail routes should *actually* go, you need to start paying attention right now.

The Sound Transit board is currently designing "Sound Transit 3," the 2016 light-rail tax package.

It could end up costing around \$27 billion—or more, or less, depending on decisions the board will make soon about new routes and the duration of the tax to fund those routes. Whatever the final decision, projects are not likely to start coming online until 15 years from next year's vote. However, the board's decisions over the next few months will determine whether light rail ends up coming to your neighborhood and where within your neighborhood it will take you.

These decisions are nuanced—official, set-in-stone route designs will happen after voters approve a package—but the board is, at this very moment, setting the general corridors for future light-rail lines (in a process that will continue over the next three months). There are lots of important projects the board is considering in the suburbs, and because those areas get to vote on this measure too, any final package needs to give them enough to get excited about. But here, on these pages, we're going to focus on a few of the key decisions to be made inside Seattle.

Chief among them: Will the agency dig a new transit tunnel under downtown? (A prospect that's expensive but pays off in terms of reliability and ridership.) And in neighborhoods like Ballard and West Seattle, which could get new light-rail service under Sound Transit 3, will the agency make choices that could make mass transit more reliable and useful to low-income people?

On the following page, you'll find the e-mail addresses and phone numbers of the people who represent the affected parts of Seattle and will be helping to make these decisions. Write them, and then write them again. And then call them, too. Between now and March, they'll be creating their draft plan for Sound Transit 3. Then they'll launch a more formal public feedback process. For more detailed maps, facts, and figures go to soundtransit3.org.

Elevating the track here instead of running it "at-grade" (which means running it alongside traffic at the area speed limit) would make trips to and from Ballard faster and more reliable, meaning more people would take the train.

Sound Transit will decide whether these lines should enter a new downtown transit tunnel. Building a new tunnel would be more expensive than other options for getting through downtown (all of them "at-grade" options) but could increase ridership dramatically.

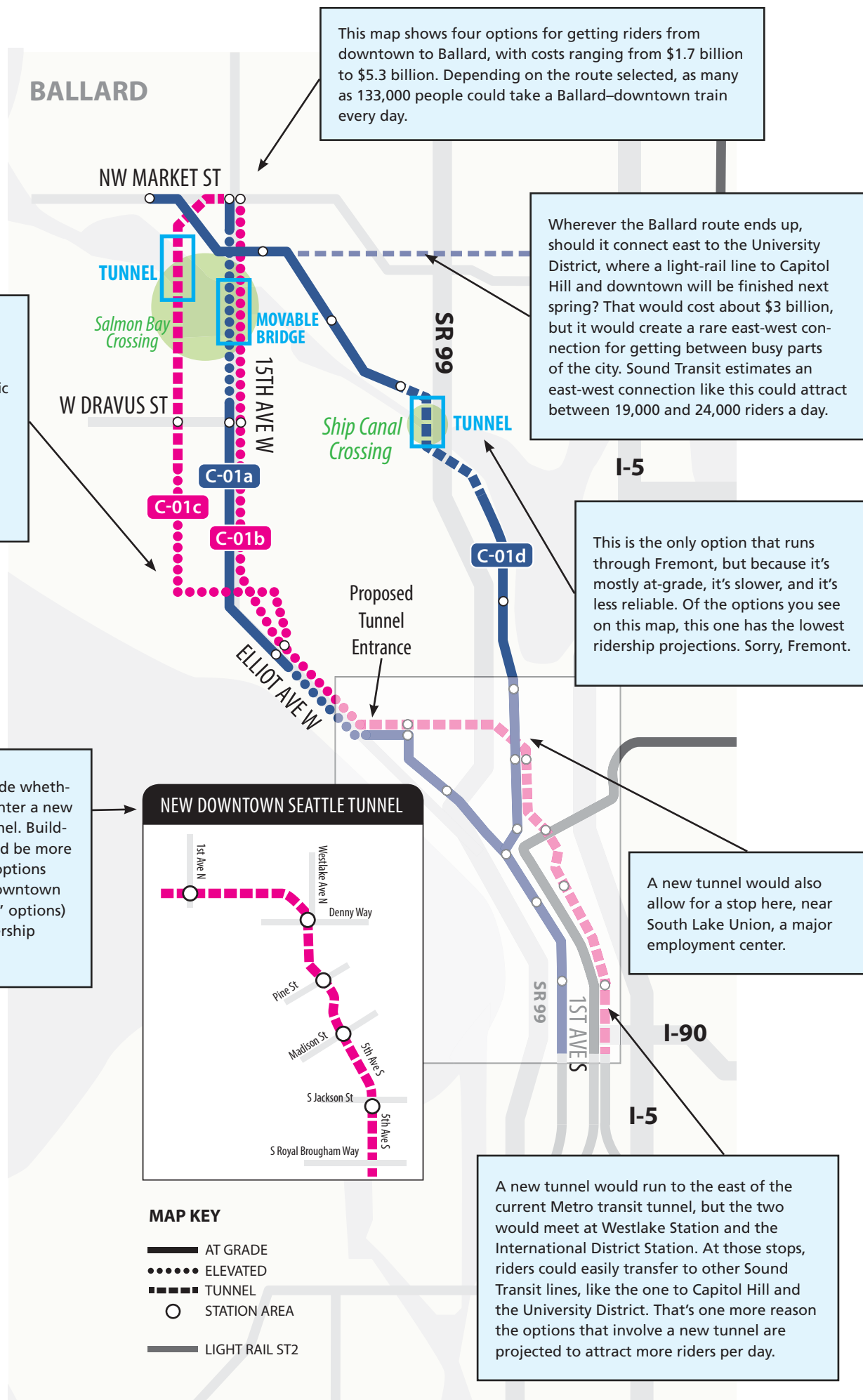
This map shows four options for getting riders from downtown to Ballard, with costs ranging from \$1.7 billion to \$5.3 billion. Depending on the route selected, as many as 133,000 people could take a Ballard-downtown train every day.

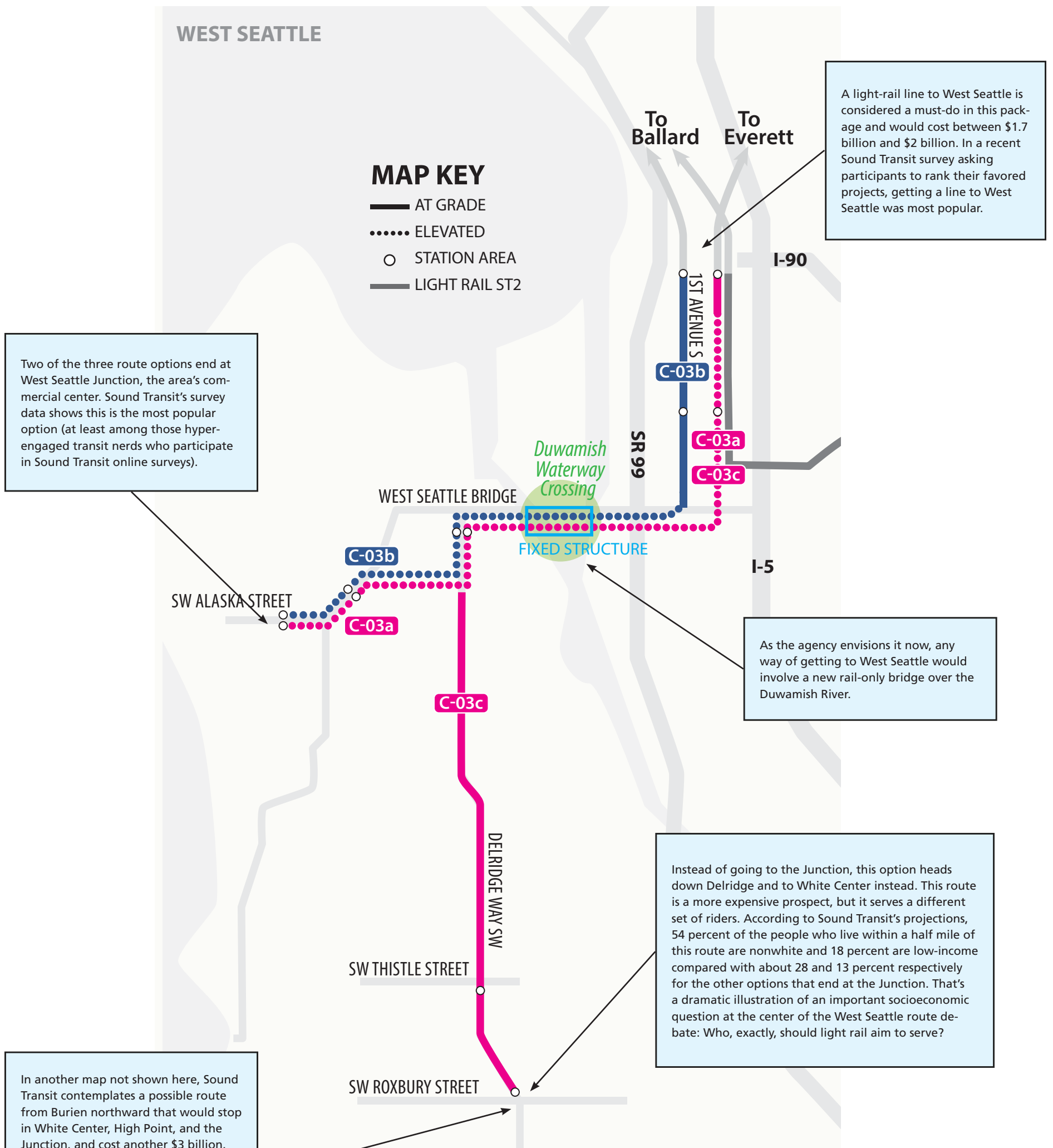
Wherever the Ballard route ends up, should it connect east to the University District, where a light-rail line to Capitol Hill and downtown will be finished next spring? That would cost about \$3 billion, but it would create a rare east-west connection for getting between busy parts of the city. Sound Transit estimates an east-west connection like this could attract between 19,000 and 24,000 riders a day.

This is the only option that runs through Fremont, but because it's mostly at-grade, it's slower, and it's less reliable. Of the options you see on this map, this one has the lowest ridership projections. Sorry, Fremont.

A new tunnel would also allow for a stop here, near South Lake Union, a major employment center.

A new tunnel would run to the east of the current Metro transit tunnel, but the two would meet at Westlake Station and the International District Station. At those stops, riders could easily transfer to other Sound Transit lines, like the one to Capitol Hill and the University District. That's one more reason the options that involve a new tunnel are projected to attract more riders per day.





How to Start Fighting for Better Light Rail:

- Sign up for updates: soundtransit3.org
- E-mail the entire Sound Transit board: EmailTheBoard@soundtransit.org
- Contact Seattle's representatives on the Sound Transit board:
 - Seattle mayor Ed Murray: ed.murray@seattle.gov, 684-4000
 - Seattle City Council member Mike O'Brien: mike.obrien@seattle.gov, 684-8800
 - King County Council member Joe McDermott: joe.mcdermott@kingcounty.gov, 477-1008
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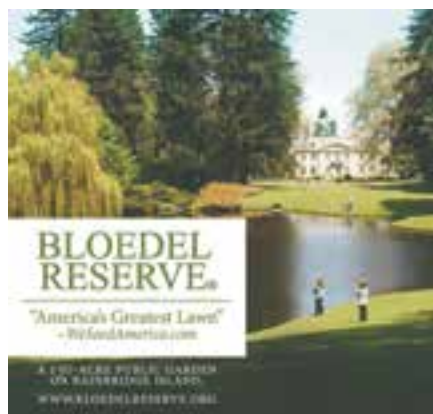
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BY TOBIAS COUGHLIN-BOGUE

Things for Dogs to Eat

The holidays can be a magical time of the year, unless you're a dog. For Fido, the holiday season can mean little demons yanking on his ears, riding him like a pony, and otherwise torturing him.

Do your dog a favor and get him **Treatibles**. While giving psychoactive substances to your pet is cruel, these treats contain no THC, just CBD, meaning they're not psychoactive. But they can "provide support for animals with a broad spectrum of conditions and help to facilitate calm and balance," says Treatibles' Marjorie Fischer.

Treatibles come in two flavors—pumpkin and blueberry—as well as two sizes, for large and small dogs. (\$26 per bag for small dogs, \$32 per bag for big dogs; available at *All the Best Pet Care* and *Uncle Ike's Glass & Goods*)

Things for Humans to Eat

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THC Cooking Oils make perfect gifts for the person in your life who loves to cook. The activated oil doesn't need to be heated to get you high and is best used for finishing. Chef Monica Dimas says it would make a great green goddess dressing. The unactivated oil is best for baking, roasting, or anything that involves heat. (\$30–\$38 per bottle; available at *Uncle Ike's*)

Want to really buy Santa's favor? Leave a plate of **SPOT Cookie Bites** for him. They come in two holiday-appropriate flavors—chocolate chip and ginger molasses, which both contain five milligrams of THC. Made with Clean Green-certified pot, they're sure to leave Santa extra jolly. (\$30 per bag of 12 ginger molasses bites, \$18 per bag of six chocolate-chip bites; available at all major Seattle pot stores)

If you're the world's worst Secret Santa, stop by your local pot shop and grab the **Zoots Holiday Assortment** box on your way

to the company holiday party. It's a multipack of Zoots' edible products packaged in a festive green box with a red cardboard ribbon. It looks just like a thoughtful gift. (\$50–\$55; available at *zootology.com*)

Things for Humans to Drink

Craft Elixirs are infused cocktail syrups that are perfect for general holiday entertaining or as a gift to the stoney cocktail nerd in your life. They come in a variety of flavors and sizes, including Capitol Hill Heat (habanero/smoke), Bagley Ave Brew (coffee/chicory), and Verdita Dragon (pineapple/lime/jalapeno). Ananda Green, manager of Ganja Goddess, says Craft Elixirs are a great option for people who don't drink alcohol but still want an "adult" beverage. (\$15 for 10 mg, \$38 for 60 mg, and \$43 for 80 mg bottles; available at *Ganja Goddess*)

For a direct—and seasonally appropriate—route to getting high this winter, try **Catapult Hot Cocoa Mocha**, an infused mix

of chocolate, THC, and marshmallows from Fairwinds' coffee brand. Makes a great stocking stuffer! (\$10 per 10 mg pouch; available at *Dockside Cannabis*)

Also from Fairwinds Manufacturing is **Deep Sleep Tincture**, which has a one-to-one ratio of CBD to THC, so it will do for you what Treatibles will do for your pooch: chill you out in the midst of the chaos, confusion, and familial discord that is the holiday season. A dropper in some bedtime tea will melt away the aches, pains, and the long hours you spent politely listening to Aunt Edna talk about her local Rotary Club. (\$38 for 100 mg; available at *Uncle Ike's*)

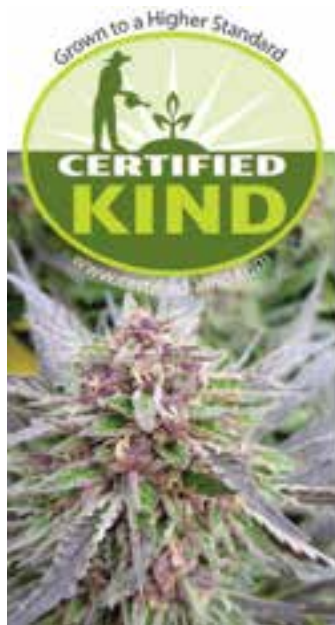
Ingestion Accessories

The **Pax 2** is the iPod of vaporizers—portable, sleekly designed, and expensive enough to really prove your love to your health-conscious significant other. It's a little brushed-steel canister that vaporizes dry herb at various temperature settings. And, according to Ganja Goddess's Green, it actually works well, unlike similar products. (\$279.99; available at *pax-vapor.com*, *Uncle Ike's*, and *Ganja Goddess*)

The **Joyboxx** was originally designed as storage for sex toys. It's a box made with antimicrobial, phenol-free plastic and features a little lube compartment on top, a sliding clasp/combo padlock, and a tiny aperture on the back for chargers. At some point, Deborah Semer, creator of the Joyboxx, realized that it was the perfect stash box for pot, too. Indeed, the lube compartment is the right size for pre-rolled joints, the charger port in the back comes in handy for rechargeable vape devices, and the locking capability is ideal for keeping nosy roommates, kids, and pets out of your weed. For the packaging, she replaced a pair of sexy legs kicked up in the air with a big ol' weed leaf, and the "action shots" on the back now feature glass pipes instead of glass dildos. (Also, did you know there's a glass pipe that is also dildo?)

Joyboxx also comes with a "play tray," a removable plastic grate that one can use to set sex toys on after use. Semer and Green told me it's the perfect solution to an apparently very common Seattle problem: cat hair on your dildo. This gift is basically tailor-made for the pothead cat lady (or cat dude) in your life, which means I'll be buying several. (\$37; available at *Ganja Goddess*)

If you're throwing a really insane corporate holiday party, you probably have an ice luge. No lavish shindig is complete without a big block of ice through which to pour shots of Malibu rum into the mouths of people you previously had a respectful, distanced relationship with. Now ganjapreneurs can enjoy the same over-the-top party experience with the **NorthWest Ice Pipe**. James Stugart is a Portland-based ice sculptor who can carve pretty much anything—including your corporate logo—into a block of ice and make a pipe out of it. (Pricing varies; *nwicepipe.com*) ■



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HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015 THEESatisfaction, Courtney Barnett, Telekinesis, Chance the Rapper, and Blur.

THE TOP 10 ALBUMS, SONGS, AND EVERYTHING ELSE FROM THE YEAR IN MUSIC 2015

BY SEAN NELSON AND STRANGER STAFF

Every year around this time, people who write about music professionally and amateurishly (and in many cases, both) are beset by the temptation to summarize the preceding 12 months into organizing principles of meaning. The year of the this. The year of the that. What the success of Adele proves. What Kendrick Lamar's artistic triumph augurs. Why both musical theater and contemporary country music aren't necessarily the worst anymore maybe.

The impulse is understandable and frequently entertaining. But it's also sort of wishful—magical realism as the new new journalism. I read the hell out of these lists, partly because I'm still that kind of nerd, and partly because they are a useful primer on all the records I didn't have time to encounter when they came out. But they make me long for the days when time wasn't such a fucking asshole, before having a job meant having a job and not three-for-the-price-of-one-if-you're-lucky, when the question "What do you mean you haven't heard the new ____ record?" didn't have such an easy and obvious answer.

The result of this is canons that are necessarily subjective. And who ever heard of a subjective canon? Oh, wait, we all have. They're called playlists.

There was no one year in music in 2015. It felt like there were dozens. That killer Missy Elliott song that showed up out of nowhere a month ago that you couldn't stop listening to? It's already an oldie in internet time, and it turns out that you *could*. How old does that make Sleater-Kinney's *No Cities to Love* (which came out last January)? Social media

and streaming services allow us to share and share alike, but they also make it easy to do so without listening. I don't mean "really" listening or listening closely—I mean literally listening at all. In the same way people are forever commenting on and sharing newsfeed stories without actually reading past the headline, I suspect the phenomenon of "*this*"-ing new songs by given artists is increasingly a function of self-decoration, affiliation without obligation, an Instagram heart followed by an unkind Tinder swipe. In every conceivable sense, it costs you nothing.

As I noted in a Slog post about two local releases I liked a great deal (by Telekinesis and Say Hi), one September week saw the release of 380 albums. It wasn't an exceptionally busy week, either: A soft 300 to 400 every seven days is now the norm. Multiply that by 52 and you have... well, I can't find the calculator app on my phone anymore, but waaaay more records than you or I will ever even hear of, much less hear. And that's before you factor in all the extra-musical things you're expected to keep up with—podcasts, films, TV shows, audiobooks, real books, magazine articles, the occasional human interaction.

Music isn't a world anymore, it's a multiverse. And thinking too hard about why the same 30 to 40 records wind up on almost every list leads to more troubling thoughts. Those thoughts become all the more troubling when I realize that my own new-music diet frequently consists of this same micro-canon. But as a wise man once shouted on a record that hasn't been new in 23 years or so (though it still sounds good to me), I'm tryin', I'm tryin', I'm tryin', I'm tryin',

I'm tryin', I'm tryin', I'm tryin', I'm tryin'... I listened to a lot more new music in the past year than I had in the previous five, but it's going to take a few years to figure out which ones are going to matter tomorrow.

In the meantime, here are those lists you've been clamoring for. It is December, after all. We're not barbarians.

—Sean Nelson,
Stranger Arts & Music Editor

Top 10 Albums of 2015 (Official)

1. La Luz, *Weirdo Shrine* (Hardly Art)
2. Silas Blak, *Editorials: (War Tunes)* (Cabin Games)
3. Chastity Belt, *Time to Go Home* (Hardly Art)
4. Blur, *The Magic Whip* (EMI)
5. Pony Time, *Rumours 2: The Rumours Are True* (self-released)
6. Kendrick Lamar, *To Pimp a Butterfly* (Top Dawg/Aftermath/Interscope)
7. Sleaford Mods, *Key Markets* (Harbinger Sound)
8. Telekinesis, *Ad Infinitum* (Merge)
9. Industrial Revelation, *Liberation & the Kingdom of Nri* (self-released)
10. THEESatisfaction, *EarthEE* (Sub Pop)

Top 10 Singles of 2015 (Official)

1. Future, "I Serve the Base" (Epic)
2. Grimes, "REALiTi" (demo)
3. Courtney Barnett, "Pedestrian at Best" (Mom + Pop)
4. Young Thug, "Best Friend" (YSL)
5. Chance the Rapper, "Angels" (Chance the Rapper LLC)

6. Childbirth, "Let's Be Bad" (Suicide Squeeze)
7. Thundercat, "Them Changes" (Brainfeeder)
8. M.I.A., "Borders" (Interscope/N.E.E.T.)
9. Titus Andronicus, "Dimed Out" (Merge)
10. David Bowie, "Blackstar" (Columbia)

Top 10 Albums of 2015 That Are No Less Good Than the Top 10 Albums of 2015, but We Committed to 10 for Some Reason

1. Protomartyr, *The Agent Intellect* (Hardly Art)
2. Aphex Twin, *Soundcloud Demos* (self-released, then deleted)
3. Sleater-Kinney, *No Cities to Love* (Sub Pop)
4. OCnotes, *Color Wheel* (self-released)
5. Vince Staples, *Summertime '06* (Def Jam)
6. Titus Andronicus, *A Most Lamentable Tragedy* (Merge)
7. Chelsea Wolfe, *Abyss* (Sargent House)
8. Ahamefule J. Oluo, *The Honorable Chief* (self-released)
9. Raz Simone, *Cognitive Dissonance Part II* (Black Umbrella)
10. The Game, *The Documentary 2* (Ca\$h Machine)

Top 10 Singles of 2015 That Are Every Bit as Good as the Top 10 Singles of 2015 but, Again, We Decided on 10, Soooooooo...

1. Malitia MaliMob, "Wake Up Call" (Black Umbrella)
2. Childbirth, "Nasty Girls" (Suicide Squeeze)
3. Drake, "Hotline Bling" (admit it!) (Cash Money)
4. Erykah Badu and André 3000, "Hello" (Motown)
5. Courtney Barnett, "Depreston" (Mom + Pop)
6. Deerhunter, "Snakeskin" (4AD)
7. Joanna Newsom, "Sapokanikan" (Drag City)
8. Phoebe Bridgers, "Killer" (Pax Am)
9. The Weeknd, "Can't Feel My Face" (XO/Republic)
10. Screaming Females, "Ripe" (Don Giovanni)

Top 10 Records of 2015 That Would Be on Every Critic's Top 10 List If Dave Segal Were King

1. Donato Dozzy, *The Loud Silence* (Further)
2. Robert Aiki Aubrey Lowe/Ariel Kalma, *FRKWYS Vol. 12: We Know Each Other Somehow* (RVNG Intl.)
3. Natural Information Society & Bitchin Bajas, *Automaginary* (Drag City)
4. The Necks, *Vertigo* (Northern Spy)
5. Co La, *No No* (Software)
6. Circuit des Yeux, *In Plain Speech* (Thrill Jockey)
7. Valet, *Nature* (Kranky)
8. Heather Leigh, *I Abused Animal* (Ideologic Organ)
9. Eternal Tapestry, *Wild Strawberries* (Thrill Jockey)
10. Obnox, *Boogalou Reed* (12XU)

Top 10 Records of 2015 That Dave Segal Dares You to Check Out If You Think You Can Even Handle It

1. M.C. Schmidt, *Batu Malablab* (Megaphone/Knock 'Em Dead)
2. Vibracathedral Orchestra, *Rec Blast Motorbike* (VHF)
3. Viands, *Temporal Relics* (Midwich)
4. High Wolf, *Growing Wild* (Leaving)
5. Hagerty Toth Band, *Qalgebra* (Three Lobed)
6. Tyondai Braxton, *HIVE1* (Nonesuch)
7. My Disco, *Severe* (Temporary Residence)
8. Daniel Menche and Mamiffer, *Crater* (SIGE)
9. Innercity, *ABABABABABAS* (*Blue Lion Child*) (Further)



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◀ 10. William Selman, *Picture of the Climates* (Hausu Mountain)

Top 10 Albums of 2015 That Are Really Excellent but Make You Feel Like the Next One Is Going to Be Even Better

1. Girlpool, *Before the World Was Big* (Wichita)
2. DoNormaal, *Jump or Die* (self-released)
3. Mackned, *Female* (Thraxxhouse)
4. The Ghost Ease, *Raw* (Cabin Games)
5. Strange Wilds, *Subjective Concepts* (Sub Pop)
6. Car Seat Headrest, *Teens of Style* (Matador)
7. Tenement, *Predatory Highlights* (Don Giovanni)
8. Bully, *Feels Like* (Columbia)
9. Julien Baker, *Sprained Ankle* (6131)
10. Pure Bathing Culture, *Pray for Rain* (Partisan)

Top 10 Records of 2015 We Liked a Lot and Might Have Put in the Top 10 Records of 2015 If Only We'd Made a Little More Time to Spend with Them So We Could Be Sure. But Time Is Precious and Finite, and There's a Lot of Music in This World and Only So Many Hours in a Day. Sorry. GOD!

1. Hop Along, *Painted Shut* (Saddle Creek)
2. Julia Holter, *Have You in My Wilderness* (Domino)
3. Lower Dens, *Escape from Evil* (Ribbon)
4. Romaro Franceswa, *Balance* (self-released)
5. Levantis, *Romantic Psychology 1* (Technicolour)
6. Grace Love and the True Loves, *Grace Love and the True Loves* (self-released)
7. Oneohtrix Point Never, *Garden of Delete* (Warp)
8. Talib Kweli, *Train of Thought: Lost Lyrics, Rare Releases & Beautiful B-Sides, Vol. 1* (Javotti)
9. Chris Stapleton, *Traveller* (Mercury Nashville)
10. Jenny Hval, *Apocalypse, Girl* (Sacred Bones)

Top 5 Albums of 2015 You Downloaded but Never Quite Got Around to Actually Listening To. The Year's Not Over Yet, Though.

1. Ryan Adams, *1989* (PaxAm)
2. Fetty Wap, *Fetty Wap* (300/Atlantic)
3. Wilco, *Star Wars* (dBPM)
4. The Weeknd, *Beauty Behind the Madness* (XO/Republic)
5. Weird Al Yankovic, *Mandatory Fun* (RCA)

Top 5 Albums of 2015 You Can Feel Okay About Pretending to Have Loved Even If You Never Made It All the Way Through Them

1. Bjork, *Vulnicura* (One Little Indian)
2. Joanna Newsom, *Divers* (Drag City)
3. Beach House, *Depression Cherry* (Sub Pop)
4. Beach House, *Thank Your Lucky Stars* (Sub Pop)
5. Sufjan Stevens, *Carrie & Lowell* (Asthmatic Kitty)

Top 5 Albums to Recommend to Your Friend Who's Roughly Your Age and Hasn't Been Paying Attention for the Past Few Years but "I Totally Need to Catch Up. Fuck, I Feel So Old!"

1. *Hamilton* Original Cast Recording (Atlantic) ("It really sounds like hiphop used to sound, before the producers took over!")
2. Speedy Ortiz, *Foil Deer* (Carpark) ("It really sounds like Pavement, but with a woman singer who can sing and write great songs!")
3. Waxahatchee, *Ivy Tripp* (Merge) ("It really sounds they just stepped out of a college radio in-studio in 1990, but like together.")
4. Blur, *The Magic Whip* (EMI) ("No, it's

new! It's like *Blur* meets *13* meets *The Great Escape!*")

5. Lower Dens, *Escape from Evil* (Ribbon) ("It's like if the '80s had actually been good!")

Top 10 Auto-Tuned Notes

1. Ab/G#
2. D natural
3. C#/Db
4. F natural
5. A natural
6. C natural
7. Eb/D#
8. E natural
9. G natural
10. Bb/A#

Top 10 Adjectives Used to Describe Kendrick Lamar's *To Pimp a Butterfly*

1. Dense
2. Contradictory
3. Provocative
4. Layered
5. Searing
6. Blistering
7. Epic
8. Ambitious
9. Forceful
10. Essential

Top 10 Hiphop Albums of 2015 You Can Safely Use to Fill Out Your Top 10 Albums List of 2015

1. Kendrick Lamar, *To Pimp a Butterfly* (compulsory) (Top Dawg/Aftermath/Interscope)
2. *Hamilton* Original Cast Recording (Atlantic)
3. The Internet, *Ego Death* (Odd Future, Columbia)
4. Drake, *If You're Reading This, It's Too Late* (Cash Money)
5. Future, *DS2* (Epic)
6. Drake & Future, *What a Time to Be Alive* (Apple Music)
7. Vince Staples, *Summertime '06* (Def Jam)
8. A\$AP Rocky, *At. Long. Last. A\$AP* (RCA)
9. Travis Scott, *Rodeo* (Epic)
10. Meek Mill, *Dreams Worth More Than Money* (Maybach Music Group/Atlantic/Dream Chasers)

Top 5 Country Artists You're Now Allowed, and in Some Cases Expected, to Like or at Least to Pretend To

1. Chris Stapleton
2. Kacey Musgraves
3. Sturgill Simpson
4. Miranda Lambert
5. Whitey Morgan

Top 10 Local Hiphop Artists You're Going to Brag About Having Been Into in 2014 in 2016 of 2015

1. Nacho Picasso
2. Porter Ray
3. THEESatisfaction
4. DoNormaal
5. Gifted Gab
6. Key Nyata
7. Mackned
8. Ugly Frank
9. Raz Simone
10. Malitia MaliMob

Top 10 Potential Subjects for a *Hamilton*-Style Rap-Based Musical About an Incongruous Historical Personage

1. John Donne
2. William of Ockham
3. The guy who invented Pez
4. Priscilla Mullins
5. Jesse Helms
6. Shigeru Miyamoto
7. Sigmund Freud
8. The making of *The Matrix*
9. Lewis & Clark & Sacagawea
10. Margaret Thatcher

Top 10 Reissues of 2015

1. Bob Dylan and the Band, *The Basement Tapes Complete* (Columbia)
2. John Coltrane, *A Love Supreme: The Complete Masters* (Verve)
3. A Tribe Called Quest, *People's Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm* (JIVE)
4. Ariel Kalma, *Open Like a Flute* (Black Sweat)
5. Sun City Girls, *Torch of the Mystics* (Abduction)
6. Built to Spill, *There's Nothing Wrong with Love* (Sub Pop/Up)
7. Lamartine, *Reportage* (Finders Keepers)
8. Savant, *Artificial Dance* (RVNG Int.)
9. Six Organs of Admittance, *Dust and Chimes* (Holy Mountain)
10. Unwound, *Empire* (Numero Group)

Top 10 Sentences by Larry Mizell Jr. of 2015

1. "It does not bang in any sense—Ryan Lewis's productions don't really do that—and is a too-many-tabs-open mess of musical ideas." (re: Macklemore's "Downtown," Aug 28)
2. "More importantly, you never get the feeling that Kendrick is going to tell you racism is a thing of the past (like Kanye or A\$AP Ferg have) or that black folks needed to 'extend their hand in love' and 'forget about the past' to fix it (as *Selma* soundtrack Grammy- and Oscar-winner Common fixed his face to say recently)." (*To Pimp a Butterfly* review, April 1)
3. "Every new name crossed out by the police—or the unlicensed, unbonded white terrorists who drink from the same well as the cops—is another invitation to be traumatized, to be filled past bursting with bile, frothing over like shook-up soda." (My Philosophy, Dec 2)
4. "Do you sit on FB commenting on scary-ass status updates bemoaning 'Somali gangbangers' on Pike Street while ignoring the fact that 300,000 of your neighbors can't send money home anymore because of the war on terror?" (My Philosophy, re: Malitia MaliMob, March 4)
5. "Let the record show that the week this album dropped: (1) Starbucks publicized a ham-fisted initiative to make their least-paid employees attempt to discuss race with their customers in the two minutes before they get their morning fix (let's hope they were insured against any resulting third-degree facial burns), (2) a black UVA student had his head beat bloody on the concrete by beverage control officers for allegedly using a fake ID; (3) a middle-aged black man named Otis Byrd was found lynched in a tree behind his own house in Mississippi, and at press time is still considered the prime suspect in his own death." (My Philosophy, re: *To Pimp a Butterfly*, March 25)
6. "To a lot of trad rap heads—who historically keep the finger they would otherwise keep on the pulse of what's going on right up their fuckin' asses—most ATL rap is identical gibberish with triplet hi-hats (and being only half-right is not being right, IMO), and rap's keynote weirdo Young Thug is pretty much the Antichrist, given his fuckless gender-flouting gangster persona." (My Philosophy, Oct 7)
7. "Something I don't mind telling you: I had an Everclear T-shirt." (Everclear preview, Nov 7)
8. "Compare that to *Compton*, which, despite some nice hooks, beats, and guests (especially Anderson Paak), smacks too much of the high-tech, hermetically sealed melodrama of an Eminem album—*WHY ARE WE YELLING?*—and too little of the creeping, laid-back menace-funk that Dre practically invented." (My Philosophy, Aug 12)
9. "If you *really* like rap—and not just the way that rap informs your self-image, and not only the rap you or your friends make, or the rap you grew up on (or the shit that just sorta sounds like it, which you also might make yourself)—well goddamn, you really might just be enjoying all this good shit dropping

in 2015 right now." (My Philosophy, July 22)

10. "Batten down the hatches, batches!" (My Philosophy, Nov 11)

Top 5 Albums from 2014 That Have Remained in Steady Rotation All Through 2015

1. Run the Jewels, *Run the Jewels 2* (Mass Appeal)
2. Flying Lotus, *You're Dead* (Warp)
3. Shabazz Palaces, *Lese Majesty* (Sub Pop)
4. D'Angelo, *Black Messiah* (RCA)
5. Angel Olsen, *Burn Your Fire for No Witness* (Jagjaguwar)

Top 5 Albums from 2014 That Haven't

1. The War on Drugs, *Lost in the Dream* (Secretly Canadian)
2. Sun Kil Moon, *Benji* (Caldo Verde)
3. Future Islands, *Singles* (4AD/Hostess)
4. Ariel Pink, *Pom Pom* (4AD)
5. Lana Del Rey, *Ultraviolence* (Interscope)

Top 5 Songs on D'Angelo and the Vanguard's *Black Messiah* That Made You Either (a) Fuck or (b) Want to Fuck in 2015

1. "Ain't That Easy"
2. "Sugah Daddy"
3. "Really Love" (1:30-end)
4. "Betray My Heart"
5. "Another Life"

Top 10 Surreptitious Vape Crannies in Seattle Clubs

1. Between the sound booth and backstage entrance at Barboza
2. Left side upper seating area at the Showbox
3. Everywhere at Chop Suey
4. Between the merch booth and showroom doors at Neumos
5. Stairwell at rear of showroom at Neumos
6. Corridor between showroom bar and bathrooms at Sunset Tavern
7. Hallway between front room and back room at Lo-Fi
8. That one alcove at the Tractor Tavern
9. Everywhere at Krenwerk
10. Next to the sound booth at Crocodile

Top 5 Songs That Should Be Banned from Karaoke Bars for a Period of No Less Than 12 Months, Starting Yesterday of 2015

1. Adele, "Hello"
2. Miley Cyrus, "Wrecking Ball"
3. Drake, "Hotline Bling"
4. Bonnie Tyler, "Total Eclipse of the Heart"
5. Do we even have to say it? (Rhymes with "gurney, won't drop a bleedin'")

Top 5 Top 10 Albums of 2015 Lists of 2015

1. Pitchfork, page 5
2. NPR Music
3. Ann Powers (personal)
4. Stereogum, page 5
5. Jeremy's Top 10 Albums of 2015 at metalinjection.net

Top 5 Songs You Can Listen To to Take Your Mind Off What a Drag That New *With Bob & David* Series on Netflix Was

1. The Beach Boys, "Don't Worry Baby"
2. Matthew Sweet, "Nothing Lasts"
3. Public Enemy, "Welcome to the Terrordome"
4. Harry Nilsson, "Don't Forget Me"
5. X, "I Must Not Think Bad Thoughts"

Top 5 Albums You Can Expect to Hear Us Going On and On About When They Come Out in 2016 of 2015

1. Gazebo, *Die Alone* (Hardly Art)
2. Ty Segall, *Emotional Mugger* (Drag City)
3. Raz Simone, *Trap Spirituals* (Black Umbrella)
4. Deep Sea Diver, *Secrets* (High Beam)
5. La Sera, *Music for Listening to Music To* (Polyvinyl) ■



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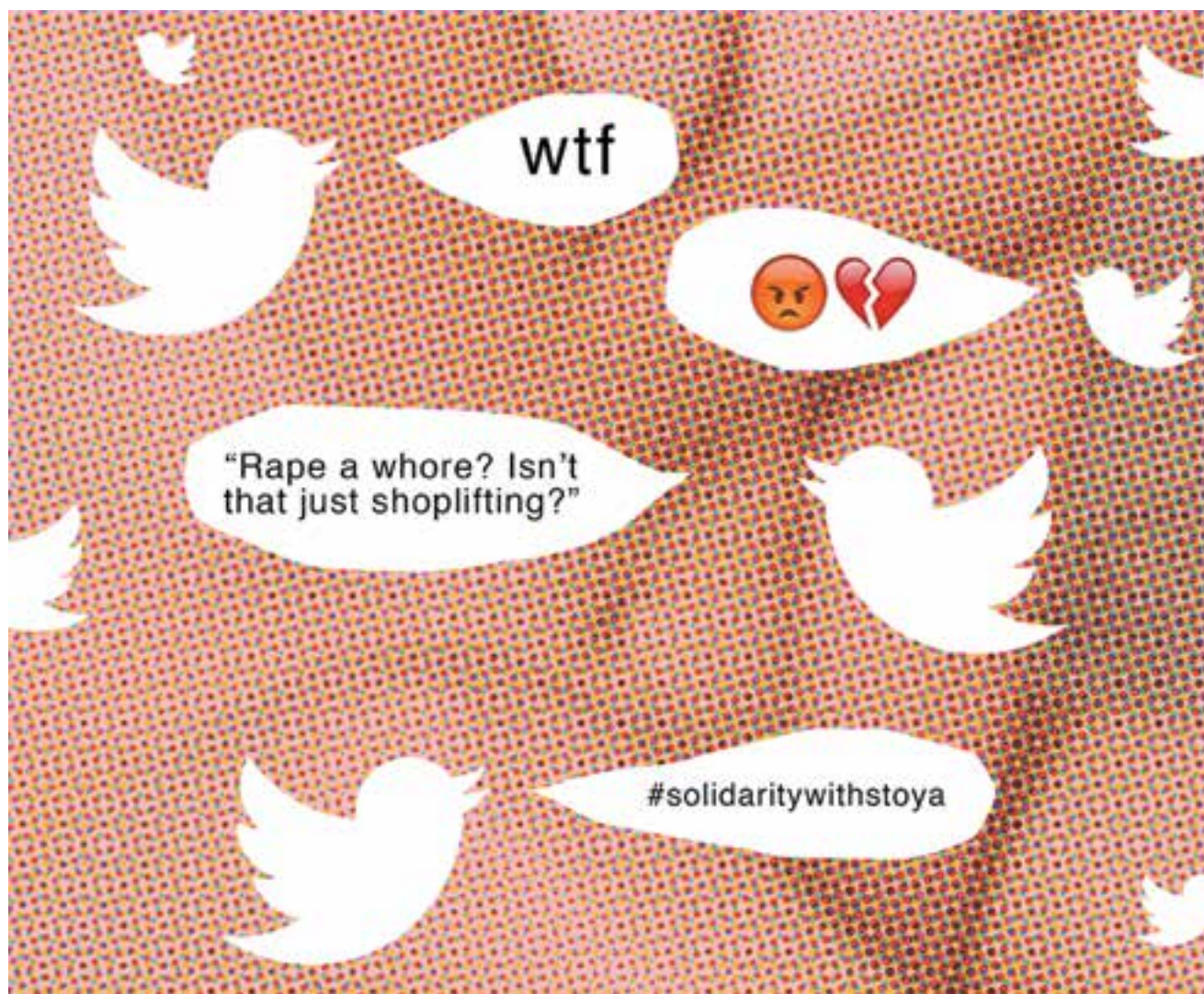
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I Can't Believe People Tell Sex Workers to "Go to the Police" If They've Been Raped

A Few Thoughts About Stoya, James Deen, and the Rape Allegations Made on Social Media

BY MISTRESS MATISSE

On November 28, writer, director, and porn actress Stoya fired off two tweets that would upend the porn world.

@Stoya: "That thing where you log in to the internet for a second and see people idolizing the guy who raped you as a feminist. That thing sucks... James Deen held me down and fucked me while I said no, stop, used my safeword. I just can't nod and smile when people bring him up anymore."

Stoya was talking about her former partner, James Deen—the adult-video-industry icon, he of the boyish good looks and cross-over media fame, whose swooning female fan base dubbed him "the feminist porn star."

Deen was silent for a day and then posted to Twitter: "There have been some egregious claims made against me... I want to assure my friends, fans, and colleagues that these allegations are both false and defamatory... I respect women and I know and respect limits both professionally and privately." He then went silent until earlier this week, when he gave an exclusive interview to the *Daily Beast* denying all allegations. He has not replied to a request for comment from *The Stranger*.

I believe Stoya. Unpleasant stories about Deen have circulated in the sex-work community since well before they were a couple, and in the days following her tweets, nine other women also came forward to say that Deen has assaulted them. One of the women, Joanna Angel, was in a relationship with him for six years. Their stories don't sound like descriptions of

misunderstandings or moments of bad judgment. They sound like persistently abusive behavior, dating back nearly 10 years in Deen's life. I believe all of them.

However, one development out of all this did pleasantly surprise me: Major porn companies responded swiftly to the women's allegations. Shortly after the allegations began coming out, major porn studios Kink.com and Evil Angel announced they would no longer work with Deen, effective immediately. Other adult businesses that had connections with Deen also distanced themselves, and non-porn website The Frisky dropped Deen's sex-advice column from its site. In a matter of days, James Deen went from being the golden boy of porn to probably unemployed in the industry.

Of course, there was a backlash. Any allegation of sexual assault invariably brings forth strident deniers, and this was catnip for whorephobes. But it wasn't just people accusing the women of "lying" and "slander." One person replied to Stoya's original tweet with "Rape a whore? Isn't that just shoplifting?"

Defending a man accused of rape by calling his accuser a "whore" is especially irksome when that man is himself a sex worker.

But there's another reaction that bothers me, not only from outsiders, but also from a disturbing number of women in the sex industry. They're defending Deen because Stoya accused him *on Twitter*.

Over the last two weeks, I have had a lot of conversations with people who say things like *Deen is being tried in the court of social media. His professional reputation is ruined because he can't prove himself innocent. None of them made a police report at the time, so how do we know it was REALLY rape? You can't accuse someone of a crime without proof!* There was a nearly constant thread of "innocent until proven guilty."

But no one has filed criminal charges against Deen. He has exactly the same access to social media as his accusers do, he can talk to the reporters of

his choice, and he has an agent and a lawyer to advise him. In my opinion, James Deen is not being victimized by the women who are saying he has harmed them.

When you say, "If it was rape, why didn't you go the police?" here's what it really means: If you don't go to the police, you're not allowed to talk about your sexual assault. Rape is like a ticket in a parking garage, apparently—if you didn't get it validated by the

powers that be, you will pay for that later. This is a silencing tactic, nothing more. No one spewing about "due process" to a sex worker who's been assaulted until her ass needs stitches actually gives a shit about the sanctity of law.

And the law certainly does not give a shit about sex workers.

I have a lot of power and privilege for a sex worker, and still I can't imagine going to the police if I were raped. To a sex worker, police are as likely to be the problem as they are to protect you from one. Take Oklahoma City police officer Daniel Holtzclaw, for example, who was just on trial for sexually assaulting 13 black women, many of whom had been sex workers. He was found guilty on 18 charges, including rape and sexual battery. We're supposed to get a rape-note stamp of approval from that guy?

Another gut-churning lesson on how sex workers fare in courtrooms is the case of Christy Mack, a nude model, dancer, and porn performer who was the victim of a horrifically violent attempted rape by her ex-partner, MMA fighter War Machine. Last year, War Machine, aka Jonathan Koppenhaver, allegedly entered her Las Vegas house, assaulted a friend of Mack's who was also present, and then beat Mack so savagely that she suffered 18 broken bones, missing teeth, and a ruptured liver.

Koppenhaver was arrested and is now facing trial on 34 felony charges, including attempted murder. His defense? Since Mack was a sex worker, she *enjoyed* the attack. Koppenhaver's defense lawyer, Brandon Sua, said in court that Mack's career shows she had a "desire, the preference, the acceptability toward a particular form of sex activities that were outside of the norm." Koppenhaver laughed openly when Mack testified in court, and at another point blew a kiss at the prosecuting attorney.


Even if Koppenhaver is convicted, it's a stark reminder of what every sex worker learns: For us, there is no due process, no unbiased hearing. When it first became known that police were seeking War Machine for the assault, MMA fans on social media vilified Christy Mack as (of course) a lying whore. Then she tweeted pictures of herself in the hospital with shocking injuries, and public sympathy shifted considerably (if not completely) in her favor.

In the case of Deen, Stoya's high social-media visibility is part of what made it safe for her to speak. Other women joined her, and their supporters made the hashtags #standwithstoya and #solidaritywithstoya go viral. If our suffering is plain, or our numbers many, then the court of public opinion is a place where sex workers may have a chance of prevailing.

James Deen is a porn brand whose stock has dropped. Doubtless that stings, but Deen is not headed to court and he's not headed to jail, so the frenzied cries of "twitter lynch mobs" are absurd. It's too soon even to say for sure his porn career is finished; other pop-culture heroes have recovered from sexual-assault accusations. Although really, if Deen truly *can't tell* when he's crossed over someone's boundaries, is he really a guy who should be employed pushing them?

Moral questions about Deen's behavior aside, it's simply *his job* to have the consent of his scene partners, the professional trust of his producers, and the admiration of his fans. If he loses that? Then he loses his livelihood. That's how fame works: You must cater to "the court of public opinion," or the public will have no use for you.

Stoya punched a hole in the wall of silence about sexual assault against sex workers, as did all the women who joined her, and I'm grateful. You may decry the court of public opinion, but until sex workers are given equality before the law, we will use it, because it's the only one open to us. ■



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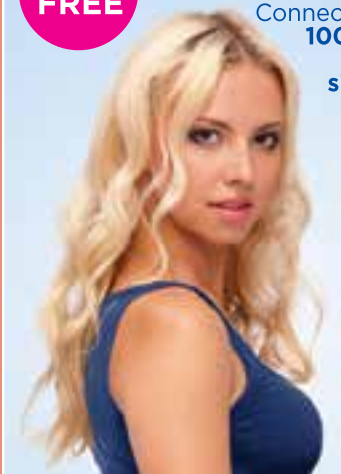


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SAVAGE LOVE

Roughly Speaking **BY DAN SAVAGE**

I'm a straight 26-year-old man who wants advice on helping my fiancée realize a particular fantasy. We have been dating for three years and are in a happy monogamous relationship. I was always vanilla, but she enjoys rougher sex and light bondage. We've incorporated some of this into our sex lives, and we are both happy with how fun it is. She has expressed interest in a rape fantasy. Both of us want to be safe when we do this, and we trust each other completely. But I cannot think of a way in which she can get the experience she desires while still maintaining a safe dynamic. I am wondering if you have advice on how I can help act out her fantasy in a way that we both have fun.

Seeking Erotic Advice Now



JOE NEWTON

You and the fiancée are obviously capable of communicating about varsity-level sex play, SEAN; your track record with bondage and rougher sex demonstrates that. Now you just have to use the same interpersonal skills that made your past kinky fuckfests possible—along with the same respect for limits, boundaries, and each other—to negotiate and realize your girlfriend's edgy-but-thoroughly-common fantasy.

I recommend reading "Rape Fantasy: How to Carry It Out Safely," a long and thoughtful post at Slut Lessons (slutlessons.wordpress.com), an engaging sex blog that's sadly no longer being updated. The first recommendation from Educated Slut, the site's anonymous author: Maybe we shouldn't call them "rape fantasies" at all.

"A rape fantasy is almost invariably more about forced sex and not a desire to actually BE raped by someone," writes Educated Slut. "Very few people have the desire to be put through the physical and emotional trauma of a real rape. This is the primary reason I refer to this as 'forced sex fantasy' rather than rape fantasy; it just gives the wrong impression to some people."

You might be one of those people, SEAN. You seem to be under the impression that there's something inherently more dangerous about realizing/role-playing your way through a forced-sex scenario. And it may be more dangerous and/or triggering on an emotional level—talking through any past traumas or fears will be important—but slapping the label "rape fantasy" on rough(er) sex shouldn't result in you having some sort of out-of-body experience that leads you to go apeshit on your helpless fiancée. Talk things through in advance, just like you have before, agree on a safe word—a word that stops the action cold should either of you utter it—and take it slow the first few times you go for it.

I'm a single straight guy and this is probably going to sound really stupid, but... I basically stumbled over the cuckold fetish and I can't get it out of my mind. I've tried to stay away from it because I'm pretty sure you aren't supposed to feel like garbage after enjoying porn. But I can't get it out of my head. It's worrying, since I fear that one day it might end up spoiling things when I fall in love with someone since I'm a bit of a jealous person. The idea of a cheating woman is really hot in spite of all of that. But there's this lingering feeling of disgust surrounding the whole thing. Is it possible to have a fetish you hate?

Baffled About Romantic Future

Don't you just hate it when someone leaves a fetish sitting out and then you stumble over it and—bam!—you hit your head and when you come to you've got a brand-new fetish?

Yeah, no. We don't know exactly where people's fetishes and kinks come from—how or why someone's erotic imagination snaps on an inanimate object (high heels, leather gear, rubber masks) or a particular sexual scenario (cuckolding, role-play, outdoor sex)—but we can safely say that people don't stumble into their fetishes or kinks.

Forgive me for being a pedantic asshole, BARF—I'm sure you didn't mean you literally stumbled over a cuckold. But misinformed, sex-negative, kink-negative pornophobes routinely talk about fetishes and kinks—and fetish/kink porn—like a moment's exposure can transform an innocent person with purely vanilla tastes into a horned-up, slobbering, gimp-outfit-wearing kink monster. And that's not the way it happens.

So what *did* happen to you, BARF? You found some cuckold porn online, and your dick said: "DUDE. THIS IS IT. THIS IS WHAT WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR. RUN WITH THIS." Your particular kink was already in there somewhere, already rattling around in your erotic subconscious, but you couldn't articulate it—it didn't take shape—until you finally "stumbled over" the images and narratives you were looking for all along. And your kink, like the kinks of so many other people (see SEAN's fiancée, above), seems to be grounded in insecurity and fear—you're the jealous type, you fear being cheated on, and your erotic imagination/reptile brain took your fears and spun them into a kink. Congrats.

On to your question: Yes, you can have a fetish you hate, i.e., you can have a kink you don't want to act on because the fantasy can't be realized for moral or ethical reasons (it involves children, nonconsensual acts, Donald Trump) or because you're fairly certain doing so would suck for emotional or physical reasons (potentially traumatizing, physically dangerous, Donald Trump).

But if your only issue with your kink are those lingering feelings of disgust, BARF, those feelings may diminish the more time you spend thinking/jacking about your newly revealed kink. Time will determine if your feelings of disgust are merely your run-of-the-mill, beneficial-to-overcome kink negativity or if they're a sign cuckolding should remain a go-to masturbatory fantasy for you, BARF, without ever become a cheating-woman reality.

I've been dating a girl for a while, and I take our relationship seriously. Sometimes sex is a little difficult because of her pubic hair. She shaves it close to the labia, which is right where my cock is going in and out, and it's very prickly. I don't mean lightly prickly—it's like a bunch of wooden chopsticks have been filed down and shaped into a cylinder, and I've been asked to let them clench my dick. I brought it up once and tried to gently suggest a waxing or letting the hair grow back. She didn't want to talk about it. I get it: Nobody likes having their genital area critiqued. But the problem keeps recurring. I understand that I don't really have the right to dictate her grooming habits. And if waxing is out of the question for her—maybe there are philosophical implications I'm not up to speed on—how can I suggest that maybe there are other solutions?

*Seeks Counsel Regarding
Agonizing Penile Exfoliation*

The only solution is your girlfriend letting her pubic hair grow back permanently, SCRAPE, since waxed labia will eventually become stubble-covered labia. Here's how you suggest letting those pubes grow back: Start by letting your girlfriend know you're aware that women have had to endure *millennia* of misogynistic/religious garbage about their genitals—but you shouldn't have to silently endure painful sex because that garbage has made discussing her choices around genital grooming unnecessarily fraught. This isn't about appearance or preferences or clashing philosophies about pubic grooming. You're in *pain*. Address the matter directly. ■

On the Lovecast, Peter Staley on the benefits and dangers of PrEP: savage-lovecast.com.

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ART

Unstoppable

DON'T MISS Inspired by a question posed by Black Lives Matter cofounder Patrisse Cullors, this four-artist exhibition provides specific instructions for how to make DIY bulletproof clothing—and how to consider constructing direct action. With work by a star list of artists/activists (micha cárdenas, Cullors, Edxie Betts, and Chris Head) and curated by Alejandra Salinas and Aeron Bergman of INCA, *Unstoppable* promises a bright, thoughtful, and layered mesh of art, politics, and self-aware practicality. Definitely don't miss the opening reception, which will feature a conversation with cárdenas, Betts, Kiyomi Fujikawa, C. Davida Ingram, and Nikkita Oliver. (*INCA*, opening reception Fri Dec 18, 7:30-9:30 pm, free, show through Jan 22) **JEN GRAVES AND JULIA RABAN**

We also recommend...

ART EVENTS

C. Davida Ingram: Frye Art Museum, Thurs Dec 17, 6-7:30 pm, free
Conversations with Curators: Crossed Paths with Chiyo Ishikawa: Seattle Art Museum, Wed Dec 16, 6-8 pm, \$10

MUSEUMS

Art AIDS America: Tacoma Art Museum, Tues-Sun, \$14, through Jan 10
The Atomic Frontier: Black Life in Hanford, WA: Northwest African American Museum, Wed-Sun, \$7, through March 6
Brenna Youngblood: abstracted realities: Seattle Art Museum, Wed-Sun, \$24.95, through April 17
Camp Fires: The Queer Baroque of Léopold L. Foulem, Paul Mathieu, and Richard Milette: Bellevue Arts Museum, \$12, through Feb 14
Constructs: Installations by Asian Pacific American Women Artists: Wing Luke Museum, Tues-Sun, \$14.95, through April 17
The Duchamp Effect: Seattle Art Museum, Wed-Sun, \$24.95, through Aug 14
Franz Erhard Walther: The Body Draws: Henry Art Gallery, Wed-Sun, \$10, through March 6
Genius / 21 Century / Seattle: Frye Art Museum, Tues-Sun, free, through Jan 10
The Harmon & Harriet Kelley Collection of African American Art: Works on Paper: Northwest African American Museum, Wed-Sun, \$7, through April 17
Heikki Seppa: Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Bainbridge Island, daily, free, through Feb 7

Continued ►



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 An advertisement for Buffalo Exchange. It features two mannequins dressed in winter clothing. The mannequin on the left wears a patterned sweater, a denim vest, a fedora, and white sneakers. The mannequin on the right wears a light-colored blazer, a patterned top, a wide-brimmed hat, and a pleated skirt. The background is dark with white text and graphics.

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THINGS TO DO ARTS & CULTURE

Star Wars: The Force Awakens

Opens Fri Dec 18



Intimate Impressionism from the National Gallery of Art: Seattle Art Museum, Wed-Sun, \$24.95, through Jan 10

James Turrell's Light Reign: Henry Art Gallery, Wed-Sun, \$10

Martha Rosler: Below the Surface: Seattle Art Museum, Wed-Sun, \$24.95, through July 4

Pablo Helguera: Librería Donceles: Henry Art Gallery, Wed-Sun, \$10, through Jan 3

Pae White: Command-Shift-4: Henry Art Gallery, Wed-Sun, \$10, through Jan 24

Paradox of Place: Contemporary Korean Art: Asian Art Museum, Wed-Sun, \$9, through March 13

Sam Vernon: Olympic Sculpture Park, free, through March 6

GALLERIES

Andrea Geyer: Travels on a Slender

Thread: The New Foundation Seattle, Thurs-Sat, free, through Jan 16

Electric Fields: 2015 Juried Exhibition: Punch Gallery, Thurs-Sat, free, through Dec 19

Ernie Fuglevand: Bon Voyage Vintage, daily, free, through Dec 31

The Figure in Process: de Kooning to Kapoor, 1955 - 2015: Pivot Art + Culture, Tues-Sun, \$5, through Feb 28

Frye Art Museum/Yesler Community Center Exhibition: Frye Art Museum, daily, free, through Jan 10

Everyone's In: The Alice, Sat, free, through Jan 9

Jake Millett: Cupcake Royale, daily, free, through Dec 31

The likeliness of an appearance: Kinnear Space, by appointment only, free, through Dec 18

Matika Wilbur: Project 562: The Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve, Tulalip, Tues-Sun, \$10, through Jun 11

Pop Up Pop In: James Harris Gallery, Wed-Sat, free

Remember to Come Back...: Mariane Ibrahim Gallery, Wed-Sat, free, through Dec 23

Roger Shimomura: Great American Muse: Greg Kucera Gallery, Tues-Sat, free, through Dec 24

Sean Michael Hurley: The Haunted Ark: Steve Gilbert Studio, free, through Jan 14

TURN: Joe Bar, Tues Dec 22, free

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com

FILM

Star Wars: The Force Awakens

DON'T MISS What will the new *Star Wars* episode be about? This will not be known until the waiting billions get to watch the J.J. Abrams-directed movie. But the millions of us who watched the very first *Star Wars* back in 1977 know what that one was about. The leading theme of that movie is junk: what to do with it, how to get rid of it, and how you can be confused with and crushed by it. The *Millennium Falcon* is a piece of junk, a whole race of little Bedouin-like nomads survives by selling junk on desert planets, and robots have only two conditions: being junk and being not junk. The base from which this fear, this preoccupation, this nightmare of junk arose was the real problem that America faced (or felt it faced) in the 1970s with consumer garbage. At the time, recycling was not yet considered to be a real solution to the problem, and so the only solution, and one that would prove to be dangerous, was to keep finding new empty places (spaces) to dump consumer junk. The problem is still with us today, but it's not dominating the American mind as it did back then, at the beginning of the end of the 20th century. What fears arose from the base of our times into the images and plot of *Star Wars Episode VII*? (Various locations, opens Fri Dec 18) **CHARLES MUDEDE**

We also recommend...

Brooklyn: Various locations

Campout Cinema: Gremlins: EMP Sky Church, Thurs Dec 17, 7:30 pm, \$12

Cartoon Happy Hour: Central Cinema, Thurs Dec 17, 5-7 pm, free

Creed: Various locations

The Good Dinosaur: Various locations
It's a Wonderful Life: Grand Illusion Cinema, daily, \$9, through Dec 28
The Martian: Various locations
The Night Before: Various locations
The Princess Bride Quote-Along: SIFF Film Center, Dec 18-Jan 3, \$15
The Shop Around the Corner: Scarecrow Video, Wed Dec 16, 7 pm, free
Spectre: Various locations
Spotlight: Various locations
Trumbo: Guild 45th
Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory in Smell-O-Vision: SIFF Film Center, Dec 18-Jan 3, \$15

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com

READINGS & TALKS

Book Launch Party for Sarah Galvin's *The Best Party of Our Lives* (with David Schmader)

DON'T MISS In her latest book, *The Best Party of Our Lives*, Sarah Galvin interviews and recounts the stories of 23 couples—the majority of them seriously committed for more than a decade—whose weddings followed shortly after the legalization of same-sex marriage. Galvin is a writer you can't stop reading. She pulls out deeply weird facts about her subjects and peppers the writing with lines like "I served enough champagne to fill a Cadillac and enough hors d'oeuvres to bury one." I'd happily pay \$50 for that line and many others in this book, and I'd pay as much to go to this book launch, too. Luckily for us, it's free, and it's bound to be good. After the reading, Galvin will be joined by the beloved David Schmader for a Q&A, which means that you are going to laugh very hard for 20 minutes and then laugh-cry for 20 minutes, and then maybe experience the glowy epiphany that love is real, and difficult, and worth it, even if you have to fight your whole life for your country to recognize that. (*Hugo House, Sun Dec 20, 7-9 pm, free*) **RICH SMITH**

We also recommend...

Seattle StorySLAM: Joy: St. Mark's Cathedral, Fri Dec 18, 8 pm, \$8

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com

FOOD & DRINK

All-Star Women's Blues Jam

DON'T MISS The neighborhood of Hillman City is home to a growing number of great places to eat and drink, such as Big Chickie, Tin Umbrella Coffee, Union Bar, and the brand-new Slow Boat Tavern. It's also home to Spinnaker Bay Brewing, Washington's only 100-percent women-owned microbrewery. Owners Janet Spindler and Elissa Pryor don't hold back, brewing robust, flavorful—and strong—beers. They've just released Spinnaker's seasonal Island Time coconut porter, a 7.2-percent porter made with hand toasted coconut flakes. This Friday gives you the opportunity to get toasty and loose at the brewery's monthly All-Star Women's Jam, featuring a rotating roster of female blues musicians. Guys are welcome too, but to just to be clear, "the priority is for the

women." (*Spinnaker Bay Brewing, Fri Dec 18, 7-11 pm, free*) **ANGELA GARBES**

We also recommend...

\$10 Pizza Mondays: Cafe Lago, Mon Dec 21, 5 pm

Seattle's "Best Damn Happy Hour": Seattle Center Armory, Thurs Dec 17, 5-8 pm, no cover

Chef Joe Holberg: Winter Is Coming Pop-Up Dinner: Pike Place Market Atrium Kitchen, Fri Dec 18, 6:30-9:30 pm, \$65

Free Wine on 15th: European Vine Selections, Sat Dec 19, 3-6 pm, free

Free Wine Tasting at Champion Wine Cellars: Champion Wine Cellars, Sat Dec 19, 12-5 pm, free

Free Wine Tasting at DeLaurenti: DeLaurenti, Sat Dec 19, 2-4 pm, free

Guest Chef Night: Tyler Krost: FareStart, Thurs Dec 17, 5:30-8 pm, \$30

Happy Hour at the Swedish Club: Swedish Cultural Center, Fri Dec 18, 5-10:30 pm

Holiday Sweets Baking Class: Canal Market, Sun Dec 20, 4-6 pm, \$45

Onibaba Ramen Pop-up: Miyabi 45th, Wed Dec 16, 11:30 am-2 pm

Paella Night: Terra Plata, Mon Dec 21, 5 pm, \$15

Sunday Pig Roast: Bell + Whete, Sun Dec 20, 5 pm, \$24

Taco Wednesdays: Roanoke Park Place Tavern, \$1 each, Wed Dec 16, 4 pm-2 am

Tiki Night: Rumba, Wed Dec 16

Wii Wednesdays: Sake Nomi, Wed Dec 16, 6 pm, free

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com

QUEER

The 5th Annual March of the Mistletoeosexuals

DON'T MISS While the Santa pub crawls of other major cities have gotten increasingly gross and disorderly, somehow Seattle's gay Santarchy has managed to maintain its composure. The rules are simple: Wear a costume (just a hat does not count unless it's the only thing you're wearing), bring your ID, tip well, and be cool. Participants will be meandering between Pony, Purr, Diesel, and Madison Pub throughout the night, with a rendezvous at the Cuff around midnight with jaunts to the Eagle likely. You're not required to bring candy canes to hand out to passers-by, but what kind of Santa doesn't carry treats in his pocket? (*Capitol Hill, Sat Dec 19, 9 pm-2 am, free*) **MATT BAUME**

We also recommend...

Bearaoke: Cuff, Tues Dec 22, 8 pm, free, 21+

Beefcake: Pony, Fri Dec 18, 21+

Bacon Strip: Christmas Gifts: Theatre Off Jackson, Dec 18-19, 9 pm, \$15 adv/\$20 DOS

DJ Night: Cuff, Dec 18-19, 10 pm, free, 21+

I Hate Karaoke: Pony, Tues Dec 22, 9 pm, free, 21+

Mimosas with Mama: Narwhal, Sun Dec 20, 1 pm, \$15-\$25, 21+

Robbie Turner's Playground: R Place, Wed Dec 16, free, 21+

Wildrose Karaoke: Wildrose, Wed Dec 16, free, 21+

Complete listings at strangerthingstodo.com

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DECEMBER 22
Two tickets and a parking pass to The Who at KeyArena on May 15 + \$100 Gift Certificate to Ten Mercer

DECEMBER 23
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DECEMBER 24
Two 3-Day passes to Bumbershoot 2016 + Merch Pack

DECEMBER 25
Four tickets to any show at the Marymoor Park Concert Series in 2016

DECEMBER 26
\$25 Sonic Boom Gift Certificate + two tickets to a show at Showbox or SoDo in 2016

DECEMBER 27
\$25 Sonic Boom Gift Certificate + two tickets to Summer Meltdown 2016

DECEMBER 28
\$25 Hooverville Gift Certificate + two tickets to any show at SoDo (21+ only)

DECEMBER 29
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DECEMBER 30
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DECEMBER 31
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THINGS TO DO MUSIC

Noteworthy Shows This Week

strangerthingstodo.com/music @SEAshtows

Los Straitjackets

Fri Dec 18 at Neptune Theatre



WEDNESDAY 12/16

Dancer and Prancer, Gazebo, Ubu Roi

(Barboza) In between classic holiday songs like "Jingle Bell Rock" and "Frosty the Snowman"—which are played in an excellent instrumental surf-rock style—the gentlemen of Dancer and Prancer chat up the crowd in heavy British accents. Daye say dat the four-piece bahnd formed abaht foive ah six years ago while dayes a'waitin' in line ter meet Santa Claus at Nahdstrom depahtment stoe. Bondin' oer their mutual love ov Christmas and rawk-ahn-roll, they realized wot better way ter spread the bloomin' joy of da season dan playin' instrumental-surf versions of 'oliday classics! Wahd spread quickly, and our boys soon found deir act ter be "in demand" at clubs and 'oliday parties from all da way from heah to Tacoma, tah Bellingham, and aw points in-between! Errywhere they play, crowd shake deir rumpas loike bowls fulla

jelly! Daye also say when they play slower, sentimental toons loike "O Holy Night," this sometooimes brings a tear ter more dan a few eyes! **KELLY O**

THURSDAY 12/17

Black Breath, Skelator, Sayonara, Conviction

(Neumos) When Black Breath released their debut full-length, *Heavy Breathing*, in 2010, they weren't the first hardcore band to bask in the worship of Entombed and Dismember, but they were one of the few unabashed disciples of Swedish death metal who could ape the classics' tonalities while putting their own spin on the actual music. With their 2012 follow-up, *Sentenced to Life*, the Seattle quintet proved that they could not only replicate the amp settings of their Scandinavian idols but could match the turbine-wristed chops of thrash giants

like Slayer. With this year's *Slaves Beyond Death*, Black Breath have delved fully into the metal world, jettisoning most stylistic vestiges of their punk past. But what they've given up in no-frills fury, they've more than compensated for in savage agility. **BRIAN COOK**

The Dears, Dear Boy, Season of Strangers

(Sunset) Dear the Dears and Dear Boy, did your bands choose to go on tour together because both of your names have "dear" in the title? Or is using that word in your band name just a sentimentality you both share? Either way, it's a fit that makes sense. The Dears, a Canadian band who've been around since 1995, create sweeping, melodramatic orchestral-pop songs with dramatic titles like "Here's to the Death of All the Romance" and "You and I Are a Gang of Losers" that recall, in sentiment and

in sound, a total Morrissey vibe, while Dear Boy conjure up some WB teen soundtrack indie-rock longing. These are songs for feeling sorry for yourself, but in kind of a fun, self-indulgent way. Oh, dear. **ROBIN EDWARDS**

The Valley, Communist Eyes, Asterhouse

(Substation) Seattle's the Valley started out in the mid '00s plowing the same seam of tuneful, ruggedly psychedelic grunge as Sub Pop luminaries Truly and Love Battery, with exuberant but not asshole macho white-dude vocals by Dan Beloit. One senses that this music will always exist in Seattle, like some sonic equivalent to a Starbucks logo emblazoned on the Space Needle that's draped in a Kurt Cobain wig. The style is deeply rooted in our identity and if it ever were to disappear, the world

Continued ►

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1/9 9:00 PM

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1/12 8:30 PM

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12.18 Friday (Funk)
FIVE ALARM FUNK
The Fabulous Party Boys, Buzz Brump

12.19 Saturday (Reggae)
CLINTON FEARON & THE BOOGIE BROWN BAND
w/ Selecta Raiford

12.22 Tuesday (Hip-Hop)
OBIE TRICE
Kush Bando & JJG, Mr. Hi-Def, Reklez

12.23 Wednesday (Hip-Hop)
KNOWMADS
Dark Time Sunshine
Rob Sonic, Divide the Poet

12.26 Saturday (DJ Dance Party)
TRL: UGLY SWEATER PARTY
#ALL4DORAS - Seattle's boy band tribute w/ DJ Indica Jones Spinning TRL-era hits plus a Top 10 Countdown

12.30 Wednesday (Electronic)
RANDOM RAB
Willdabeast, Rafe Pearlman

12.31 Thursday (80s New Wave Bash)
NITE WAVE NYE
Voyager, #All4Doras, DJ Baby Van Beezly

1.2 Saturday (Phish Tribute)
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1.9 **JUAN MACLEAN (DJ SET)**

1.14 **YOGOMAN**

1.15 **ARISAWKADORIA**

1.16 **MARTYPARTY / KAMINANDA**

1.17 **SOPHISTAFUNK**

1.21 **SHIGETO**

1.22 **PRINCE VS MICHAEL**

1.23 **ANDY COE BAND with TIM BLUHM (MOTHER HIPS)**

1.29 **SIR MIX-A-LOT**

1.30 **KUNG FU**

1.31 **ROB GARZA (OF THIEVERY CORPORATION)**

2.4 **VICCI MARTINEZ**

2.5 **ACORN PROJECT**

2.6 **JAI HO! 5 YR ANNIVERSARY**

2.9 **CUMBIEROS**

2.12 **MOTOPONY**

2.13 **ONRY OZZBORN + P.O.S.**

2.18 **HAPPY ORCHESTRA / INDUSTRIAL REVELATION**

2.19 **DEAD PREZ**

2.25 **BLADES-SKERIK-COE**

2.26 **DEADPHISH ORCHESTRA**

2.28 **BEACON / NATASHA KMETO**

3.12 **CLINTON FEARON**

4.8 **QUANTIC (LIVE BAND)**

THE CROCODILE

12/17 THURSDAY



The Dears @ The Sunset
Dear Boy 21+

12/18 FRIDAY



The Crocodile & ReignCity Present::
Devin The Dude
"Happy Holiday Tour"
Potluck, Sta Hi Brothas, All Star Opera 21+

12/19 SATURDAY



Citizens & Saints and Beautiful Eulogy All Ages

12/20 SUNDAY



The Crocodile, ReignCity & Valedictorious Present:
A Very Special Holiday Charity Event: Intimate Live Performance By: Snoop Dogg
Kokane 21+ **Sold Out**

12/26 SATURDAY



Shop Estate Presents::
Avatar Darko vs Ugly Frank
Nyles Davis, Beeba, Tele Fresco All Ages

12/31 THURSDAY



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THINGS TO DO MUSIC

wouldn't know how to lazily pigeonhole us. Anyway, the Valley carry on the tradition with vigor, rocking hard, catchily, and fuzzily enough to make you want to whirl your hair in frenzied circles, chiropractic bills be damned. Their latest release, the excellent *The Halloween* EP, approaches Monster Magnet levels of maleficent stoner rock. **DAVE SEGAL**

Boss Guitar: Game Changers: Jimi Hendrix & Eddie Van Halen

(Royal Room, all ages) The odds of Seattle-ites catching either Jimi Hendrix or Eddie Van Halen in flagrante delicto with their guitars is infinitesimally small. Obviously. But what if you wanted to hear the Magic Johnson and Larry Bird of rock-guitar artistry in an intimate venue, performed by dexterous acolytes? The Royal Room can help you. Tonight, Kathy Moore, RL Heyer, Thaddeus Turner, and Danny Godinez will, according to the venue's website, "unpack [Hendrix and Van Halen's] lasting impact on the sound, role, and mystique of their instrument." Here's a chance to witness these badasses demonstrate the innovative, deeply soulful psych-blues and flamboyant, heavy-metal maneuvers that launched a thousand *Rolling Stone* canon-building lists. Recommended if you wanna run with the devil through crosstown traffic. **DAVE SEGAL**

FRIDAY 12/18

Chimurenga Renaissance, Clinton Fearon

(Victory Studios, all ages) It is fitting that

the most experimental, dazzling, and even dangerous work by Chimurenga Renaissance (Tendai "Baba" Maraïre and Hussein Kalonji), the upcoming *Girlz with Gunz*, finds its inspiration in the postcolonial fire of the revolutionary African woman. The duo translates this fire (ballots or bullets) into a music that's richly and thickly innovative. Chimurenga Renaissance's contribution to the trans-African Black Constellation (Shabazz Palaces, THEESatisfaction, Erik Blood) is very bright indeed. **CHARLES MUDEDE**

Nick Lowe & Los Straitjackets, Cactus Blossoms

(Neptune, all ages) At first glance, you might think this a strange pairing—British singer-songwriter of a certain vintage who became a master 40 years ago and has miraculously only gotten better with time AND the rowdy rockabilly instrumental combo that... Oh, wait, no. It's a match made in goddamn heaven—this is borne out by the new live album, *The Quality Holiday Revue*, which finds the ensemble tearing into Lowe gems recent and old alongside holiday chestnuts. The thought of Lowe going in for holiday shtick remains puzzling, but consider the brilliant career he has made of locating the humanity within clichés and ennobling them with his actual genius for indelible melody, crucial detail, and perfect rhyme. When Lowe plays a show, you're a fool not to go. **SEAN NELSON**

X, Mike Watt and the Secondmen

(Showbox) It's rare to find a punk band that can truly stand the test of time, that can tour now and not look like a sad shell of their former nihilistic selves. To be fair, the live-fast-die-young mentality mixed with whatever cocktail of intoxicants the

generation of yesteryear could find isn't exactly a formula for aging gracefully. X, on the other hand, are timeless. Whether it's 1981 or 2015, the LA-based legends—led by John Doe and Exene Cervenka—sound spot-fucking-on. Founding Minutemen member Mike Watt is no slack, either, as he's constantly working on side and solo projects, one of which will be opening the show. The Secondmen, his stripped-down (surprise, surprise) bass-driven punk trio is proof he's not content just living in the past. **KEVIN DIERS**

No Age, Wimps, Acid Tongue, SSDD, Powwers

(Neumos) Given the past half decade's run of successful lo-fi garage-rock bands (to vignette an obviously longer tradition), LA's No Age could have slapped their enjoyable fuzz-rock riffs down on a handful of hip indie blogs, toured the grimy punk venues of America with reasonable success, and called it a day. Instead, they've collaborated with multimedia artists for installations around the globe, constructed handmade zines and thousands of their own album packages, and pushed the boundaries of their sound with ambient psych-rock formations and electronic elements that have made their records sound like far more than the two-man production they are. Their liquid style and involved, instrument-rotating live show will likely be the highlight of the most action-packed night of the two-night, four-show Psychedelic Holiday Freakout mini-festival. **TODD HAMM**

Dope Music Festival: Lil Wayne, Rich Homie Quan, Omarion, Lil Dicky, K Camp

(Xfinity Arena, Everett, all ages) It's funny to think that Lil Wayne may now find

himself at the most interesting point in his career. This is the post-Rikers-Island-stint, post-assassination-attempt, post-rock-music-foray, current-Cash-Money-lawsuit-pressing, continuously-syrup-slugging Weezy, and for better or worse, he's probably more himself than ever. He still misses marks as much as he lands hits—the sheer volume of his work has always made it inevitable—but instead of simply testing his ability to mix metaphors and pop hashtag punch lines for the hell of it, Wayne now has the perspective to address incidents that have affected the trajectory of his storied career, and given the scope of his influence, the trajectory of Southern rap as a whole (check "CoCo" from this year's *Sorry 4 the Wait 2*). The New Orleans legend hasn't let his troubles get him down, though. To keep the mood ridiculous, Tunechi rolls this night with ATL's flamboyant Rich Homie Quan and joke rapper Lil Dicky. **TODD HAMM**

Phantoms, Beat Connection

(Barboza) LA electronic duo Phantoms look like nice, attractive young men, playing their sets in suits, using glow-in-the-dark drumsticks, releasing their music on the Universal Music subsidiary Casablanca/Republic. As evidenced by their buoyant new EP, *Broken Halo*, Phantoms are going to be festival fixtures, because festivalgoers love their sort of hooky, smooth, vocal-centric dance fare. Seattle's Beat Connection perfectly complement the headliners with their own cheerful dance pop for people who find Hot Chip a bit too edgy. **DAVE SEGAL**

Devin the Dude, Potluck, Stay High Brothas, All Star Opera

(Crocodile) There's a strain of melancholy, Southern rap that bangs bluesily, utilizing chicken-scratch guitars, deep-fried organs,

HIGHLINE

Friday, December 18
Holiday Freakout!:
THE MAMA RAGS
Moondog Matinee,
Tango Alpha Tango,
Hand of The Hills,
Kingdom of the Holy Sun,
Boone Howard
8PM, \$13-\$15

Saturday, December 19
DISPIRIT
Shrine of the Serpent,
Void Wraith
9PM, \$10

Sunday, December 20
**ONE GOD DAMN
HELL OF A SHOW**
Stand Up Comedy
7PM, \$3

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SAT 12/19 // 10pm 70s, 80s, 90s NIGHT
CEREMONY with Evan Blackstone
and Chance Green // \$5

SUN 12/20 // 10pm HOUSE MUSIC
FLAMMABLE
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With Stranger Genius Award winner Mr. Chris
Jeffries. // \$22 Adv. \$25 Door

SUN 12/20 // 7pm
MATCH GAME
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THINGS TO DO MUSIC

and sumptuous horns to tell bleary-eyed street tales and revel in sunbaked nostalgia. It's a lush, humid sound, and Houston's Devin the Dude has pretty much perfected it over a decades-long career in the game. His sleepy drawl and penchant for hilariously kush-addled observations have afforded him a cult fan base many up-and-coming rappers would kill for, and his remarkable streak of good-to-great releases suggest a quality control that may surprise you, given his nonchalance and chilled demeanor on record. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention his track "Doobie Ashtray," the most heart-breaking ballad about friends stealing your weed ever released. **KYLE FLECK**

SATURDAY 12/19

Holiday Party: Pinky Promise, Hyasynth, Succubass, MTBTZ, Hydef (Kremwerk) Witnessing the continued evolution/refinement of nightlife hotspot Kremwerk has been one of the few truly inspiring things happening in the Seattle scene of late. The club has been embraced by the queer community just as much as brainy techno folk, through a refined combo platter of bookings and monthly nights. And now, with another year already fading into the rearview, they bring it back to their roots with a night of deep techno, heady house, and ugly holiday sweaters. About those sweaters: \$100 prizes will be given out for "most grandma sweater," "most over-the-top sweater," and more, so you better come to play. Excellently well-versed DJs Pinky Promise, Hyasynth, and friends will provide the funk all night long. **KYLE FLECK**

Smokey Brights, Cataldo, Planes on Paper (Tractor) Go to the Tractor Tavern. Do it. Do it for Smokey Brights, who are the kind of crackly and warm guitar-driven rock that you already know and love, even if you've never heard it. It's that warm blanket that you throw over your head to avoid dealing with your uncle's off-color rants about refugees. Do it for Cataldo, whose constant evolution from breakup song-slinging troubadour to slick frontman with a horn section has been one of the catchiest, most fun death rattles of the Seattle Americana scene. Do it for yourself. **KATHLEEN TARRANT**

SUNDAY 12/20

David Bazan, Andy Fitts (Tractor) It's the holidays. You're already sad. I don't care how many parties you have lined up, I know you've been holed up in your apartment watching *White Christmas* and crying into your eggnog. So just do that in public. At the Tractor. With David Bazan, Seattle's foremost expert on not being into all the things people tell us to be into. Sink into new arrangements from his vast catalog, remember what it is like to feel again. Yell out requests for Headphones songs, try to start a mosh pit. When you get kicked out of the venue, you'll know it was worth it. **KATHLEEN TARRANT**

ArtAche Market: Briana Marela, DJ Explorateur, DJ One Eye (Chop Suey) Do you feel some sort of ambiguous sense of guilt about your holiday shopping proclivities? Are you looking for the *most* local, *most* artisanal, and *most* DIY presents for your loved ones? Do you also want to listen to fresh, colorful, and weird music, spun by some of Seattle's finest disc jockeys? Friend,

I have just the thing for you. Chop Suey's ArtAche Market is a reliable treasure trove of hand-crafted art, clothing, and other bits and bobbles, and this "holiday edition" promises to be extra-special, with DJ sets by Explorateur and One Eye, plus a live performance from electronically inclined singer-songwriter Briana Marela. For free! **KYLE FLECK**

MONDAY 12/21

Pity Sex, Colleen Green, Eskimeaux, Where My Bones Rest Easy (El Corazon, all ages) "I'd do anything to make you feel," Pity Sex dual vocalists Britty Drake and Brandon Pierce harmonize on their longing anthem "Dogwalk." While it sounds like they're singing to each other or some out-of-reach love interest, they may as well be speaking to us as listeners. Feelings (particularly the sad-face-emoticon kind) are the common thread of this excellent lineup filled with bands who would do anything, and are pretty much guaranteed, to make you *feel*. Pity Sex do it with loud, bummed out-but-triumphant guitar riffs and lonely lyrics, while Eskimeaux take a more quiet approach with intimate dreamy bedroom pop that feels whispered tenderly into your ear by a close friend. Pop-punk drum-machine queen Colleen Green emotes the existential angst of growing up in totally catchy pop songs, while locals Where My Bones Rest Easy will round out the night of shared catharsis with songs that sound like long-lost tracks from some early-'00s Saddle Creek Records release. **ROBIN EDWARDS**

Alex's Hand, Rhine, Spacewaster (Substation) It ain't easy for an American prog-rock band in 2015. The group Alex's Hand felt so, and recently left Seattle for Berlin, which is typically a techno producer's

move. But perhaps such a transition also makes sense for musicians who revere Frank Zappa, Henry Cow, and Mr. Bungle. Generally speaking, a higher ratio of Europeans tend to be more amenable to rock in weird time signatures than do Americans. Anyway, Alex's Hand—led by multi-instrumentalist/composers Kellen Mills and Nic Barnes—return to their old stomping grounds to preview a new album, *Künstler Scheiße*. As with their past work, it's a cerebrum-twisting amalgam (especially the winkingly titled "Mars Travolta") of surprising tempo shifts, abrasive and beautiful guitar and keyboard textures, and vocals both enchanting and exasperating. Prog-rock fans should check out Alex's Hand, one of the few modern exponents of the genre doing it as rigorously as their '70s progenitors. **DAVE SEGAL**

TUESDAY 12/22

Obie Trice, Kush Brando & JJG, Mr. Hi-Def, Reklez (Nectar) If there's one thing Shady Records progeny Obie Trice wants you to know, over the course of four albums for the infamous imprint, it's that dude likes to drink. From his debut *Cheers*, sophomore effort *Second Round's on Me*, 2012's *Bottom's Up*, and his just-released *The Hangover*, it seems that the guy might have a problem. His problems are more multifarious than all that would imply, though, as he kicks rhymes about drug dealing, gang-banging, and general Detroit malaise. He cuts an entertaining, though sometimes hazily defined, unreliable narrator through the weed fog. That's the double-edged sword with consistency: Without peaks or troughs to his long career (by rap standards, anyway), his catalog seems to waft by on the familiar gangster story lines and anonymous trap beats. **KYLE FLECK**



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BEFORE CHRISTMAS

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1:27 TOO MANY CREEPS 1:29 THE SPIDER FERNS (P RELEASE)
1:29 GODHEADS! (RECHUBBLES) 2:5 KULTUR SHOCK
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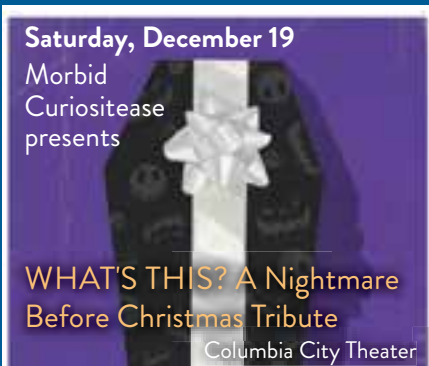
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Before Christmas Tribute
Columbia City Theater



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Elements of Touch, Dance, & Play

Sunday,
December 20
Center for
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Annex



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Thursday, December 31 • Hale's Palladium



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THINGS TO DO **MUSIC**

All the Shows Happening This Week

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★ = Recommended Ⓐ = All Ages

WED 12/16

LIVE MUSIC

♫ **88 KEYS** Musicians' Jam: Jens Gunnoe, guests, 8 pm, free
AQUA BY EL GAUCHO Ben Fleck, 6 pm, free
 ★ **BARBOZA** Dancer and Prancer, Gazebo, Ubu Roi, 8 pm, \$8
BUCKLEY'S IN BELLTOWN Live Music: Guests, 8 pm
CAFE RACER Star Wars Soundtrack Live Performance: 10:30 pm
 ♫ **CROCODILE** Heffron Drive, 8 pm, \$15-\$90
DARRELL'S TAVERN Open Mic: Guests, 9 pm, free
 ♫ **EL CORAZON** Quieter, Glacier Veins, Kathleen Parrish, Itemfinder, 7:30 pm, \$8/\$10
 ♫ **FIX COFFEEHOUSE** Open Mic: Guests, 7 pm, free
HIGH DIVE Shawn Smith, guests
HIGHWAY 99 Big Road Blues, 8 pm, \$7
J&M CAFE The Lonnie Williams Band, 8 pm, free
KELLS Liam Gallagher
LO-FI Sundog, 8 pm
NECTAR Sounds from Around the World: DJ Bibi McGill, Adrian Xavier, Deseo Carmin, Michel Navedo, 8 pm, \$8
OHANA Live Island Music: Guests, 9:30 pm
OLD RAINIER BREWERY

Afro Latino Drum and Rhythm Circle/Class: 8 pm
OWL N' THISTLE Justin and Guests: 9 pm, free
PARAGON Two Buck Chuck, 8 pm, free
SKYLARK CAFE & CLUB Open Mic: 8:30 pm, free
SOUND CHECK BAR & GRILL Open Mic: Guests, 8 pm
SUBSTATION Qualia, Mulder It's Me, Citizen Corvus, 8 pm
TRACTOR TAVERN Patchy Sanders, Steep Ravine, Spare Rib & the Bluegrass Sauce, 8 pm, \$10
TRIPLE DOOR MUSICQUARIUM LOUNGE Sundae and Mr Goessl, 8:30 pm

JAZZ

★ ♫ **THE ROYAL ROOM** Thomas Marriott Ceptet, 7:30 pm, donation
SARAJEVO LOUNGE Gypsy Jazz Music: 8 pm
TULA'S Cascadia Big Band, 7:30 pm, \$7
VITO'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE Brad Gibson, 9 pm

DJ

BALTIC ROOM Bollocks: Guests
 ♫ **CENTURY BALLROOM** Bachata Intro Lesson & Dance: Swing Intro Lesson & Dance: 9 pm, \$8, 9 pm, \$8
CONOR BYRNE Rainier Soul Sounds: 9 pm, free
CONTOUR NuDe

Wednesdays: Guests, 9 pm, free
FOUNDATION Willy Joy, 10 pm, \$8.21
HAVANA Wicked & Wild: DJ SoulOne, ZJ Redman, Selecta Element, free; \$5 after 10 p.m.
NECTAR Sounds from Around the World: DJ Bibi McGill, Adrian Xavier, Deseo Carmin, Michel Navedo, 8 pm, \$8
NEIGHBOURS Exposed: DJ Trent Von, DJ Dirty Bit
Q NIGHTCLUB Baauer, 9 pm, \$16
STUDIO SEVEN Electric Wednesday: Guests

CLASSICAL

♫ **BASTYR UNIVERSITY** Praetorius Christmas Vespers: Early Music Guild, 7:30 pm, \$20/\$39
 ★ ♫ **BENAROYA HALL** Home for the Holidays: Seattle Men's Chorus, \$27-\$77
 ♫ **EGAN'S JAM HOUSE** Charisma Noel: Nora Michaels, Victor Janusz, guests, 9 pm, \$15
ICICLE CREEK CENTER FOR THE ARTS Madama Butterfly: \$12-\$24

THURS 12/17

LIVE MUSIC

AQUA BY EL GAUCHO Ben Fleck, 6 pm, free
BARBOZA Jazmarae Beebe,

Spencer Glenn Band, Scarlet Parke, 8 pm, \$8
BLUE MOON TAVERN Garrett and the Sheriffs, Silverhands, Kirk Reese, 9 pm
CAFE RACER Earl Brooks, 9 pm
 ♫ **CHAPEL PERFORMANCE** SPACE Nineteen Crimes, Bad Luck, All Region Player, 8 pm, \$7
 ★ ♫ **CHOP SUEY** The Flavr Blue, 8 pm, \$12
 ★ **COLUMBIA CITY THEATER** The Best Open Mic Ever: Guests, 7:30 pm; free, These Young Fools, Imaginary Lines, Everson Pines, 8 pm, \$8/\$10
 ♫ **DOWNPOUR BREWING** Open Mic Night: Guests, 5 pm, free
GHOSTFISH BREWING COMPANY St. John and the Revelations, 6 pm, George Grissom, 6 pm
HIGH DIVE Hosannas, the Pro-Nouns, the Western Red Penguins, 8:30 pm, \$6
HIGHWAY 99 Trailer Park Kings, 8 pm, \$7
J&M CAFE True Romans, 8 pm, free
KELLS Liam Gallagher
LO-FI Girl Group Holiday: Shana from La Luz, DJ Mamma Casserole
THE MIX Yada Yada Blues Band, 9 pm, free
 ★ **NECTAR** Lil Debbie, Slightly Flagrant, Shane Diamanti, DJ Indica Jones, 8 pm, \$15

KREMWERK'S 2ND ANNUAL

Holiday Party

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TAINTED TALES: SLEIGH KWEEEN / SHELITA POTROAST / ABBEY ROADS
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 QUEER WOMEN'S EVENT / DJ TRINITRON / PONY MANE / JULIA PLANETDISCO
 TEA PARTY HAPPY HOUR / NO COVER / \$1 BEER BUST / DJ DANA DUB / DJ PAVONE
 TAINTED TALES: EGGNOG HANGOVER / SHELITA POTROAST / ABBEY ROADS
 SPARKLE, GLOW, GLITTER PARTY / PINKY PROMISE / TYLER BROWN / CLIFFLYNK

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DRUNK OF THE WEEK



KELLY O

SWIM TRUNKS OF THE WEEK

Have you ever been to a swimming pool at a resort casino? You have to be a paying guest, and the rooms can be kinda pricey... but the frickin' pool makes it all worth it. When it's dark outside and it rains nonstop for two weeks straight, sometimes you need a little "staycation." Forget the expensive spa treatments and massage packages—just roll yourself a joint and hit the pool. About the time your fingers have wrinkled into raisins, you get a cocktail and find a Kitty Glitter slot machine. Everything will be almost right with the world again, I promise. **KELLY O**

20 PRESENTS
 30% OFF THEMED GLASS
 ETWOK & YODA OG FLOWERS
 \$12 GRAMS limit 1
 \$9 JOINTS

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THINGS TO DO All the Shows Happening This Week

★ **NEUMOS** Black Breath, Skelator, Sayonara, Conviction, 8 pm, \$13

PARAGON Kitt Bender, 9 pm

PARLIAMENT TAVERN
No The Good Hearts, Jeff Stillwell, Mold Wave, 8 pm

RENDEZVOUS SeanyCee, 10isee Williams, Burney, 9:30 pm, \$8

★ **THE ROYAL ROOM**
Boss Guitar: Game Changers: Jimi Hendrix & Eddie Van Halen: 8 pm, \$10/\$12

SCRATCH DELI Music Open Mic: Free

SEAMONSTER Marmalade, 10 pm

SLIM'S LAST CHANCE
Big Bad, Skunk Rider, the SkyeMonkey, 9 pm, \$5

★ **SUBSTATION** The Valley, Dark Palms, Asterhouse, 8 pm

★ **SUNSET TAVERN** The Dears, Dear Boy, 9 pm, \$13

TIM'S TAVERN Nikola Whallon, Timmy Tombstone, Andy Wylie, \$5

TRACTOR TAVERN
TubaLuba, Rippin Chicken, 8 pm, \$10

★ **VICTORY STUDIOS**
Evening Bell, the Crying Shame, 7 pm, \$5/\$10

JAZZ

★ **BARCA Jazz** at Barca: Phil Sparks Trio, Adam Kessler, guests, 9 pm, free

🍷 **JOZZ ALLEY** New York Voices, Dec 17-20, 7:30 pm, \$30.50

PINK DOOR Bric-a-Brac: 8 pm

🍷 **SHUGA JAZZ BISTRO** Chris James Quartet, 7 pm, free, Chris James Quartet, Keely Whitney, 7:30 pm

★ **TRIPLE DOOR**

MUSICQUARIUM 5:30 PM KO Ensemble, 8:30 pm

TULA's Lift Kit, 7:30 pm, \$8

VITO'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE Paul Gabrielson Trio, Casey MacGill, 5:30 pm

DJ

BALLROOM Throwback Thursdays: DJ Tamm of KISS fm, 9 pm

BALTIC ROOM Sugar Beat: DJ Bret Law, \$3

CONTOUR ElectricITY: Jaded: Guests, Smayna, DJ OneLove, DJ ChosenOne, 10 pm

★ **HAVANA** Sophisticated Mama: DJ Nitty Gritty, DJ Sad Bastard, free

JAZZBONES College Night: DJ Christyle, 9 pm

MERCURY Corroden: \$5

NEIGHBOURS Revolution: DJ Marty Mar, Michael Kutt

OHANA '80s Ladies Night:

PONT Billion Dollar Babies: DJ Aykut Ozen, Pretty Baby, 9 pm

Q NIGHTCLUB Family Christmas: Brian Lyons, Kadeejah Streets, Almond Brown, Blueyedsoul, Tyler Brown, \$5

R PLACE Thirsty Thursdays: DJ Flow

TRINITY Beer Pong Thursdays: Deaf!Nt, Chris Herrera, Christyle, free

CLASSICAL

★ ♡ **BENAROYA HALL**
Home for the Holidays: Seattle Men's Chorus, \$27-\$77

♡ **CENTRAL LIBRARY**
Medieval Women's Choir, Thurs, Dec 17, noon

♡ **CHAPEL HILL**
PRESBYTERIAN Messiah: Tacoma Symphony Chorus, 7:30 pm, \$25/\$45

ICICLE CREEK CENTER
FOR THE ARTS Madama Butterfly: \$12-\$24

FRI 12/18

LIVE MUSIC

88 KEYS Dueling Piano Show: 8 pm, free

9 LB. HAMMER Rat City Brass, 9 pm

AQUA BY EL GAUCHO Ben Fleck, 6 pm, free

BALLARD HEALING ARTS Tibetan Sound Bath: 5:30-

Songs and Stories: 7 pm

JAZZBONES Stacy Jones, 8 pm, \$10

♡ **KIRKLAND**
PERFORMANCE CENTER
Geoffrey Castle, Dec 18-19, 8 pm

THE KRAKEN BAR & LOUNGE Kraken Acoustic Night: 9 pm

★ **KREMWERK** Squall: Microscopic Suffering, Blowupnihilist, BLSPHM, PrisonFood, Killing Frenzy, DJ Maire, 6 pm

★ **LO-FI** Maszer, Ten Miles Wide, Foxy Lemon, Honey. Moon.Free, 9 pm, \$8/\$10

NECTAR Five Alarm Funk, the Fabulous Party Boys, Buzz Brump, 9 pm, \$12

★ ♡ **NEPTUNE THEATRE**
Nick Lowe & Los Straitjackets, Cactus Blossoms, 8 pm, \$28

★ **NEUMOS** No Age, Childbirth, Acid Tongue, Bread and Butter, Powwerrs, 8 pm, \$15

RENDEZVOUS Black Giraffe, Screens, Trick Candles, 9:30 pm, \$8

THE ROYAL ROOM Twisted Groove, 8:30 pm, \$10

♡ **SALMON BAY EAGLES**
One Million Kids For Equality Music Benefit: Sophia Duccini, Waking Things, Amy Hall, the Furies, 6:30 pm, \$10

♡ **SALSA CON TODO** Salsa con Todo Drop-In Classes and Social Dance: Guests, 8 pm, \$5-\$20

SEAMONSTER Live Funk: Guests, 10 pm, free

SHOWBOX SODO Yellow Claw, 7 pm

★ **THE SHOWBOX** X, mike watt and the secondmen, 8 pm, \$25/\$30

SKYLARK CAFE & CLUB
Anti-Christmas Special: No Bollocks, the Dee Dees, the Dumps, DJ Naughty Nice, 9 pm, \$7

SLIM'S LAST CHANCE Zero Down, Substratum, Stoned Evergreen Travelers, 9 pm

★ **SPINNAKER BAY**
BREWING All-Star Women's

Blues Jam: Guests

📍 **STONE WAY CAFE** David Guilbault, 7:30 pm

📍 **STUDIO SEVEN** Winter Wonderland White Out Party: Guests, 8 pm

SUBSTATION Fonzarelli, Kid Leather, Franklin & Bash, 8 pm

SUNSET TAVERN The Great Um, Prom Queen, Brandon Daniel, the Chics, 9 pm, \$10

THE SWISS The Hipsters, 9 pm

📍 **THIRD PLACE**

COMMONS Rainy City Riff Raff Jazz Band, 7:30 pm

TIM'S TAVERN The Teacher's Lounge Band, \$7

TRACTOR TAVERN Flowmotion, Mts & Tunnels, A Cedar Suede, 9 pm, \$12

VERMILLION Wildstyle: Guests, 10 pm, free

★ 📍 **VICTORY STUDIOS** Chumirenga Renaissance, Clinton Fearon, 7 pm, \$5/\$10

★ 📍 **XINITY ARENA** Lil Wayne, Rich Homie Quan, Omarion, Lil Dicky, K Camp, 6 pm, \$63-\$153

JAZZ

♣ JAZZ ALLEY New York
 Voices, Through Dec 20,
 7:30 pm, \$30.50
TULA'S Alex Dugdale
 Ensemble, 7:30 pm, \$16
**VITO'S RESTAURANT &
 LOUNGE** Milky's Way, 9 pm
DJ
ASTON MANOR Cabaret
 Fridays: Guests
BALLROOM Rendezvous
 Friday: Guests, 9 pm
BALMAR Top 40: Guests,
 9:30 pm, free
★ BALTIC ROOM Juicy:
 '90s & 2000's Old School
 Throwbacks: Fundamental
 Fridays: Guests, Shorthand,
 Pat Nasty, \$10

Con

♫ CENTURY BALLROOM
Salsa Intro Lesson & Dance:
8:30 pm, \$8-\$15
★ **CUFF DJ Night:** Rotating
DJs, 10 pm, free
FOUNDATION Mike
Hawkins, 10 pm, \$10
HAVANA Viva Havana &
Havana Social: DJ Sean Cee,
DJ Send, DJ Pho Sho, guests,
\$6/\$10; females free before
10 p.m.
JAZZBONES Filthy Fridays:
Guests, 11 pm, \$10
KREMWERK Primary Toy
Drive with the Good Vibe
Tribe: Darrius, Sean Majors,
Ian Powers, FooFou, 10
pm, \$5 before 11 pm/\$10
after/\$5 off with toy dona-
tion
MERCURY Black Light
District: Skinlayers, Psysop,
9 pm, \$5
NEIGHBOURS Absolut
Fridays: DJ Richard Dalton,
DJ Trent Von, 9 pm
OHANA DJ Night: Guests, 10
pm, free
OZZIE'S DJ Night: Guests, 9
pm, free
R PLACE Swollen Fridays:
9 pm
★ **RE-BAR** Hydro Funk:
OCNotes, Proh Mic, 9 pm
STOUT DJ ePop, 9 pm
THE CARLILE ROOM
Maxwell Edison
THERAPY LOUNGE Under
Pressure: 9:30 pm, \$3 after
10:30 p.m.
TRINITY Fridays at Trinity:
Guy, VSOP, Tyler and DJ
Phase

CLASSICAL
★ ♫ **BNARROYA HALL**
Messiah: Home for the
Holidays: Seattle Men's
Chorus, \$27-\$77, Seattle
Symphony, Seattle
Symphony Chorale, \$25-\$88
♫ **HOLY ROSARY**
CATHOLIC CHURCH A
Festival of Lessons & Carols:
Northwest Boychoir, 7:30
pm, \$16-\$28
ICICLE CREEK CENTER
FOR THE ARTS Madama
Butterfly: \$12-\$24
♫ **ST. CHARLES**
BORROMEO Messiah:
Tacoma Symphony Chorus,
7:30 pm, \$25/\$45

ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL
Praetorius Christmas
Vespers: Early Music Guild, 8
pm, \$20/\$39

SAT 12/19

LIVE MUSIC

88 KEYS Dueling Piano Show: 8 pm, free

🔴 **THE AMPLIFY PROJECT** Always Only Sometimes, guests, 7 pm

AQUA BY EL GAUCHO Ben Fleck, 6 pm, free

BARBOZA Tesla Boy, Cuff Lynx, Rose Quartz, Maiah Manser, Zoolab, 7 pm, \$15

BLUE MOON TAVERN Po Brothers, No Crown, Brine

CAFE RACER Supposably, Forty Year October, O Hannah, 9 pm

CLUB HOLLYWOOD

CASINO Johnny and the Bad Boys, DJ Becka Page, 9 pm, \$5

COLUMBIA CITY THEATER What's This? A Nightmare Before Christmas Tribute: L'Orchestre D'Incrovable, 8 pm, \$16

★ 🔴 **CROCODILE** Destroy My Sweater: Weezus & Goat Reward: Weezus, Goat Reward, 6 pm, \$6, Citizens & Saints, Beautiful Eulogy, 6:30 pm, \$12

DARRELL'S TAVERN Juke, Zach Harjo, Ian Jones, 9 pm

EGAN'S JAM HOUSE Carrie Clark & the Lonesome Lovers, Von Piglet Family Players, Through Dec 19, 7 & 9 pm, \$10

EL CORAZON H20, Success, Motion, Red Scare, 7 pm, \$13/\$15, Dancer and Prancer, Fe Fi Fo Fums, the Fuzz, 9:30 pm, \$6/\$8

🔴 **FREMONT ABBEY** Noah Gundersen, Lemolo, Valley Maker, guests, \$20

HIGH DIVE Tres Hombres, Finger Guns, Goose Vargis, 9 pm, \$8

HIGHLINE Dispirit, Shrine of the Serpent, Void Wraith, 9 pm, \$10

HIGHWAY 99 Andy Stokes Band, 8 pm, \$17

🔴 **KIRKLAND**

PERFORMANCE CENTER Geoffrey Castle, Through Dec 19, 8 pm

🔴 **MOORE THEATRE** An Appalachian Christmas: Mark O'Connor, \$42.50/\$52

NAKED CITY BREWERY & TAPHOUSE The Beggar Boys Christmas Session: Beggar Boys, 8 pm, \$20

★ **NECTAR** Clinton Fearon & the Boogie Brown Band, Seleta Raiford, 8 pm, \$12

★ **NEUMOS** Grizzled Mighty, Black Whales, Dude York, \$5DD, 8 pm, \$15

PARAGON Luke Stanton, 9 pm

RENDEZVOUS Blackpool Astronomy, Sacred Signs, Hannah Racecar, 9:30 pm, \$7

🔴 **THE ROYAL ROOM** 3rd Annual Keepin' It in the Fam Holiday Show: Darol Anger, Emy Phelps and Fam, 5 pm, \$18/\$20

SEATTLE AQUARIUM Johnny Bregar and the Country Dawgs

SEATTLE ASIAN ART MUSEUM Dim Sum Dialogues: 6:30-10 pm

🔴 **SEATTLE CENTER** Xmas Maximus, 12:30 pm

SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY SOUTH PARK BRANCH Libros y Más: 11 am-4 pm

SKYLARK CAFE & CLUB The Forgotten 45's, Wild English, 9 pm, \$7

SLIM'S LAST CHANCE Big City After Dark, King County Queens, Stafford and the Bentz Bros., 9 pm

SOULFOOD COFFEEHOUSE AND FAIR TRADE EMPORIUM Chronilus, 8 pm, \$8/\$12

🔴 **STUDIO SEVEN** Everybody Panic!, Kristen Palmer, BingX, Awaiting Eli, Black Magic Noise, 6:30 pm

★ **SUNSET TAVERN** Gaytheist, VHS, Merso, Old Iron, 9 pm, \$8

THE SWISS Kryboys, 9 pm

The image is a vertical promotional poster. At the top, the text 'the Stranger's' is in a blue script font, followed by 'COCKTAIL COMPASS' in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. To the right is a logo of a light blue cocktail glass with a black compass rose inside. Below the main title, a grey banner contains the text 'A HAPPY HOUR APP' in a blue, italicized, sans-serif font. The central part of the poster features a large, clear glass filled with a red cocktail and ice. A small, blue monkey figurine is perched on the rim of the glass, holding a red straw. To the left of the glass is a black square logo with white text that reads 'SAINT JOHN'S BAR & EATERY'. Below this logo, the text 'MON-FRI 2PM-6PM' is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. In the bottom left corner, there is a small, light brown dog standing on its hind legs. In the bottom right corner, a yellow starburst shape contains the text 'AVAILABLE on iPhone & Android!' in black, bold, sans-serif capital letters. At the very bottom, a black banner contains the website address 'www.COCKTAILCOMPASS.COM' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. On the left side of this banner, there is a small blue Twitter bird icon followed by the text 'Follow Cocktail Compass on Twitter @cocktailcompass' in white. The background of the poster is a blurred outdoor scene with green foliage and brown ground.

TACOMA RIALTO THEATER

The Christmas Revels:
\$18-\$34

★ **TED BROWN MUSIC** Afro Latino Drum and Rhythm Circle/Class: 10 am

THERAPY LOUNGE Rock & Roll Toy Drive: Acapulco Lips, Beverly Crusher, Gang Cult, Sun Thieves, Philharmonic Bacteria, Wheelies, Model Snake, the Shrews, Garbeau, Difficult Children, 6 pm, \$7

TIM'S TAVERN Apache Truck Stop, \$7

★ **TRACTOR TAVERN** Smokey Brights, Cataldo, Planes on Paper, 9 pm, \$10

UNIVERSITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Carols of the World: City Cantabile Choir, \$18/\$20

VERMILLION Pad Pushers: Guests, 9 pm, free

VICTORY LOUNGE GLASS GOBLINS, Garbeau, guests, 9 pm, \$7

JAZZ

★ **JAZZ ALLEY** New York Voices, Through Dec 20, 7:30 pm, \$30.50

★ **PHINNEY CENTER COMMUNITY HALL** Sugar and Spice Holiday Cabaret: Angie Louise, guests, 7:30 pm, \$16/\$18

THE ROYAL ROOM Crack Sabbath, 9 pm, \$10

★ **THIRD PLACE COMMONS** Seattle Women's Jazz Orchestra, 7:30 pm

TULA'S Marc Seales Quartet, 7:30 pm, \$16

VITO'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE The Tarantellas, James Band, 6 pm

DJ

ASTON MANOR NRG Saturdays: Guests

BALLARD LOFT Hiphop Saturdays: DJ Pheloneous, DJ Tamm of KISS fm, DJ Brett Michaels, 10 pm

BALLROOM Sinful Saturdays: Guests, 9 pm

BALMAR Top 40 Night: Guests, 9:30 pm, free

BALTIC ROOM Crave Saturdays: McClarron, Swel, 10 pm

BARBOZA Inferno: DJ Swervewon, guests, 10:30 pm, \$5 before midnight/\$10 after

BUCKLEY'S IN BELLTOWN '90s Dance Party: Guests, 9 pm

CHOP SUEY Dance Yourself Clean: Guests, 9 pm, \$5; free before 10:30 p.m.

CORBU LOUNGE Saturday Night Live: DJ BBoy, DJ 5 Star

★ **CUFF** DJ Night: Rotating DJs, 10 pm, free

FOUNDATION Shaun Frank, 10 pm, \$10-\$20

HAVANA Viva Havana & Havana Social: DJ Sean Cee, DJ Send, DJ Pho Sho, guests, \$6/\$10; females free before 10 p.m.

★ **KREMWERK** Kremwerk's Second Annual Holiday Party: Pinky Promise, DJ Hyasynth, Succubass, MTBTZ, Hydef, 9 pm, \$10/\$8 with a "tacky sweater"

MERCURY Machineries of Joy: DJ Hana Solo, \$5

NEIGHBOURS Powermix: DJ Randy Schlager

OHANA DJ Night: Guests, 10 pm, free

OZZIE'S DJ Night: Guests, 9 pm, free

PONY Meat: Amateur Youth, Dee Jay Jack

Q NIGHTCLUB Mija, 10 pm, \$17

R PLACE Therapy Saturday: DJ Flo'w

RE-BAR Ceremony: DJ Evan Blackstone, guests, 10 pm, \$5

REVOLVER BAR Jo Smitty, guests, Sat, Dec 19, noon

RUNWAY CAFE DJ David N, free

SARAJEVO LOUNGE European/Balkan/Greek Night: Guests

STOUT DJ ePop, 9 pm

SUBSTATION The Hideout Presents... The InnterFlight Takeover Party: Night Train, Buckmode, Anthony Robinson, guests, 10 pm

★ **THE CARLILE ROOM** Larry Mizell Jr.

THERAPY LOUNGE This Modern Love: Guests

TRINITY Saturdays at Trinity: DJ Nug, DJ Kidd, Rise Over Run, guests, \$15/ free before 10 pm

CLASSICAL

★ **CAFE SOLSTICE** A Winter Solstice Concert: Stanley Greenthal, SeaMuse, 4 pm, \$6-\$15

★ **FIRST FREE METHODIST CHURCH** Handel's Messiah: Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers, 7:30 pm, \$10-\$25

ICICLE CREEK CENTER FOR THE ARTS Madama Butterfly: \$12-\$24

★ **SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH** Magnificat: Seattle First Baptist Sanctuary Choir, Dec 19-20, 7:30 pm

★ **ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH** Season of Wonder: Bellevue Chamber Chorus, 7:30 pm, \$5-\$20

★ **ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL** Natus Est Rex: Medieval Women's Choir

★ **ST. MARK'S CATHEDRAL** A Festival of Lessons & Carols: Northwest Boychoir, 7:30 pm, \$11-\$28

SUN 12/20**LIVE MUSIC**

AQUA BY EL GAUCHO Ben Fleck, 6 pm, free

BARBOZA Great Grandpa, A Townsman Echo, Fruit Juice, Bike Thief, Town Forest, 7 pm, \$10

★ **BEACON ARTS** Squaredance at the Garden House: Guests, 6 pm

BLUE MOON TAVERN Big Bad, Stiff Upper Lip

★ **CAFE RACER** The Racer Sessions, 7:30 pm, free

★ **CHOP SUEY** ArtAche Holiday Market: Briana Marela, DJ Explorateur, DJ One Eye, 1 pm

THE CLOUD ROOM Sing-a-Long Revival: John Roderick, Shenandoah Davis, guests, 7:30 pm, \$10

COLUMBIA CITY THEATER A 75th Birthday Tribute Concert to Phil Ochs: 7:30 pm, \$8/\$10

EL CORAZON Jason Michael Carroll, Dylan Jakobsen, the Olson Bros Band, 7 pm, \$13/\$15

★ **HIGH DIVE** Chung Antique, White Bear Polar Tundra, Intisaar, Jondus Beckman, 8:30 pm, \$6

KELLS Liam Gallagher **LITTLE RED HEN** Open Mic Acoustic Jam with Bodacious Billy: Guests, 4 pm

LO-FI Johnny Young, Elizabeth La Fey, 8 pm

★ **RENDEZVOUS** WMD, Retrodream, HimeHime, 9:30 pm, \$8

★ **SEATTLE CENTER** The Bobs, 12:30 pm

★ **SHOWBOX SODO** The 1975, Swim Deep, 8 pm, \$30/\$33

SUBSTATION Melt the Halls: Rat King, Dumbfox, Ice Teeth, Pilot to Bombardier, 8 pm

TACOMA RIALTO THEATER The Christmas Revels: \$18-\$34

TIM'S TAVERN Kirsten Silva's Seattle Songwriter Showcase: Guests

★ **TRACTOR TAVERN** David Bazan, 8 pm, \$20

UNIVERSITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Carols of the World: City Cantabile Choir, \$18/\$20

VARSITY THEATRE A Capella Holiday Show: 7 pm, \$15

JAZZ

THE ANGRY BEAVER The Beaver Sessions: Guests, free

★ **BALLARD ELKS** Ray Skjelberd's Yeti Chasers, 1 pm, \$15

DARRELL'S TAVERN Sunday Night Jazz Jam: Guests, 8 pm, free

★ **HARISSA** Sunday Bossa Nova: Dina Blade, 6 pm, free

★ **JAZZ ALLEY** New York Voices, Through Dec 20, 7:30 pm, \$30.50

★ **THE ROYAL ROOM** The Music of "A Charlie Brown

Christmas": 5 pm, donation

★ ★ **TIM NOAH'S THUMBNAIL THEATER** A Charlie Brown Christmas: Jose Gonzales, guests, 7:30 pm, \$20

★ ★ **TULA'S** Jazz Underground, 3 pm, \$8, Jim Cutler Jazz Orchestra, 7:30 pm, \$8

★ **UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH** Jazzin' with the Classics: Tom Collier, guests, 7 pm, donation

★ **VITO'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE** Ruby Bishop, 6 pm, free, the Ron Weinstein Trio, 9:30 pm, free

DJ

BALTIC ROOM Resurrection Sundays: DJ Shane, Jade's Pain, 10 pm

★ **CHOP SUEY** ArtAche Holiday Market: Briana Marela, DJ Explorateur, DJ One Eye, 1 pm

CONTOUR Broken Grooves: Guests, free

CORBU LOUNGE Salsa Sundays: DJ Nick, 9 pm

NEIGHBOURS Noche Latina: DJ Luis, DJ Polo

PONY TeaDance: DJ El Toro, Freddy King of Pants, 4 pm

R PLACE Homo Hop: Guests

★ **RE-BAR** Flammable: DJ Wesley Holmes, Xan Lucero, guests, 9 pm, \$10

★ **REVOLVER BAR** No Exit: DJ Vi, Sun, noon

CLASSICAL

★ ★ **BENAROYA HALL** Messiah: Symphony, Seattle Symphony Chorale, \$25-\$88

ICICLE CREEK CENTER FOR THE ARTS Madama Butterfly: \$12-\$24

★ **PROSPECT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH** Season of Wonder: Bellevue Chamber Chorus, 3 pm, \$5-\$20

★ **SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH** Magnificat: Seattle First Baptist Sanctuary Choir, Through Dec 20, 7:30 pm

★ **ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH** A Festival of Lessons & Carols: Northwest Boychoir, 7 pm, \$16-\$28

★ ★ **ST. MARK'S CATHEDRAL** Compline Choir, 9:30 pm, free

★ **UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH** Candelight Concerts: Mary Lynch, Sarah Hall, 7 pm

MON 12/21**LIVE MUSIC**

88 KEYS Blues On Tap, 7 pm, free

AQUA BY EL GAUCHO Jerry Frank, 6 pm, free

CAPITOL CIDER EntreMundos, 9:30 pm

CONOR BYRNE Bluegrass Jam: 8:30 pm, free

★ ★ **EL CORAZON** Pity Sex, Colleen Green, Eskimeaux, Where My Bones Rest Easy, 7 pm, \$13/\$15

HARD ROCK CAFE Gina Belliveau, 5 pm

HATTIE'S HAT Sundae and Mr Goessl, 8 pm, donation

KELLS Liam Gallagher

LUCKY LIQUOR Sid Law

★ **RE-BAR** Monster Planet: Guests, 9 pm-midnight, free

★ **SUBSTATION** Alex's Hand, guests

SUNSET TAVERN Distant Station, the Pimpsons, the Famished, 8 pm, \$8

TRIPLE DOOR MUSICQUARIUM LOUNGE Crossrhythm Sessions, 9 pm, free

JAZZ

THE ROYAL ROOM Home for the Holidays: Sammy Miller and the Congregation, Evan Shay's Lawful Citizen, Chris McCarthy, 7 pm, \$10

TULA'S Ph Factor Big Band, 7:30 pm, \$8

DJ

BALTIC ROOM Jam Jam: Mista' Chatman, DJ Element, 9 pm

★ **BAR SUE** Motown on Mondays: dj100proof, Supreme La Rock, DJ Sessions, Blueyedsoul, 10 pm, free

★ **CENTURY BALLROOM** Salsa Social: 8:30 pm, \$8

★ **THE HIDEOUT** Industry

Standard: Guests, free

★ **MOE BAR** Moe Bar Monday: DJ Swervewon, Jeff Hawk, DJ Henski, 10 pm, free

TRIPLE DOOR MUSICQUARIUM LOUNGE DJ Jigsy, 8 pm

CLASSICAL

★ ★ **BENAROYA HALL** Home for the Holidays: Seattle Men's Chorus, \$27-\$77

ICICLE CREEK CENTER FOR THE ARTS Madama Butterfly: \$12-\$24

★ **ST. MARK'S CATHEDRAL** A Festival of Lessons & Carols: Northwest Boychoir, 7:30 pm, \$11-\$28

TUE 12/22**LIVE MUSIC**

88 KEYS Seatown Allstars, 8 pm, free

★ **AMBER RESTAURANT** Folias, 6 pm, \$10 for tango class and practice/\$5 dance only/free to watch

AQUA BY EL GAUCHO Ben Fleck, 6 pm, free

CAFE RACER Jacobs Posse

CONOR BYRNE Country Dancing Night: 9 pm

EL CORAZON Tom Bennett, Kelsey Sprague, 8 pm, \$6/\$8

HIGH DIVE Appalachian Yard Art, Mullen, Crocker's Mountain, 8:30 pm, \$6

J&M CAFE All-Star Acoustic Tuesdays: Guests, 9 pm, free

KELLS Liam Gallagher

THE MIX The 350s, 8 pm

★ **NECTAR** Obie Trice, Tribal Order, Mr. Hi-Def, Eddie Grandpre, Reklez, 8 pm, \$15

PARAGON You Play Tuesday: Guests, 8 pm, free

★ ★ **THE ROYAL ROOM** Eugene Marie, Luke Stanton, Song Sparrow Research, 7:30 pm, donation

SEAMONSTER McTuff Trio, 11 pm, free

★ **SKYLARK CAFE & CLUB** Baby Ketten Karaoke: 9 pm, free

SUNSET TAVERN Ahmi Ahms, Strange Like Us, Echo Texture, 8 pm, \$8

TACOMA RIALTO THEATER The Christmas Revels: \$18-\$34

TIM'S TAVERN Open Mic: Linda Lee, 8 pm

TRIPLE DOOR MUSICQUARIUM LOUNGE Paul Benoit Trio, 8:30 pm

★ **VERA PROJECT** Knowmads, All Star Opera, DJ Indica Jones, 8 pm, \$10/\$12

JAZZ

HARD ROCK CAFE Kristin Chambers, 5 pm

★ **JAZZ ALLEY** The Senate, Dec 22-23, 7:30 pm, \$28.50

OWL N' THISTLE Jazz with Eric Verlinde: 9 pm, free

THE ROYAL ROOM Delvon Lamarr, 10 pm

TULA'S Tim Kennedy Trio, Jimmie Herrod, 7:30 pm, \$12

DJ

BALTIC ROOM Drum & Bass Tuesdays: Guests, 10 pm

★ **BLUE MOON TAVERN** Blue Moon Vinyl Revival Tuesdays: DJ Country Mike, A.D.M., guests, 8 pm, free

★ **CENTURY BALLROOM** West Coast Swing Social: Tango Class & Dance: 8:30-11 pm, \$8, 9 pm, \$8

CONTOUR Burn: Voodoo, 9 pm, free

CORBU LOUNGE Club NYX Wave & Goth: 10 pm, \$5; free before 10:30 p.m.

★ **HAVANA** Real Love '90s: BlesOne, Jay Battle, \$3; free before 11 p.m.

MERCURY Die: Black Maru, Major Tom, \$5

NEIGHBOURS Pump It Up: Vogue: DJ Lightray

ROB ROY Analog Tuesdays: Guests, free

SUBSTATION Bring Your Own Vinyl: Guests

CLASSICAL

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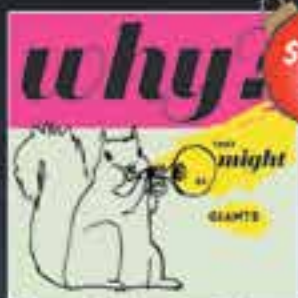


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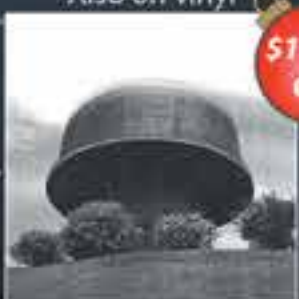
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MUSIC

SHANA CLEVELAND *Good morning, America. How are you?*

WILL SPROTT

In 2015, I Released Two Albums and Spent 161 Days on the Road—It Was Boring, Disgusting, Lonely, Dreamy, and Great

BY SHANA CLEVELAND

In 2015, I spent 161 days on the road. I spent a couple weeks touring in support of my first solo album and a couple weeks selling merch for Shannon and the Clams, but the bulk of my time away from home was with my band La Luz, who recorded and released our second album, *Weirdo Shrine*, this year. Whenever I return home, everyone has the same question for me: “How was tour?” To which I dumbly reply “Great,” condensing half of my life into a single word. It would also be true if I said “boring” or “disgusting” or “lonely” or “dreamy.” My time on the road would be better described with a few random glimpses of the places we went.

Miami

We crashed at our friend Ben’s mom’s place and didn’t have far to drive that day, so we got to indulge in one of those rare perfect tour mornings when you’re in a comfy spot and time isn’t much of an issue. Pancakes! Laundry! Showers for everyone! The beach was a few lazy blocks away, and the water was warm. As a kid, when people talked about heaven, I always imagined myself rolling and bouncing on big pillowy clouds, and that’s what it felt like to swim that day. I was

laughing, and my friends were there and they were all laughing, the sun smiling down on the tops of our heads. We were free and loose in the universe.

Atlanta

Our day in Atlanta started with a shitty radio interview with a host who didn’t seem to know who we were. “So you guys are all female?” was actually a full question that expected an answer, and the follow-up “Are you trying to say something?” only made things worse. Marian [Li Pino, drummer] put her head on the desk and started to take a nap, live on-air. I attempted to create a new band narrative by listing every 1990s horror-metal group I could think of as a creative influence. We were told that Big Boi from Outkast was a La Luz fan, so we put him on the guest list but (surprise!) he didn’t show. Usually we

love playing Atlanta, but this crowd was kinda stiff and we were trying our damndest to loosen them up. During one song, Lena [Simon, bassist] and I lunged backward on top of the crowd and she almost got dropped on her head.

Asheville

We played a fun show at an outdoor tiki bar and slept at my cousin Molly’s house. I got my own room in the basement in a kind of storage room/guest bedroom. There were no windows, just a tiny door on the wall next to the bed. I was feeling kinda creeped out but also tired, so I turned off the light to go to sleep. Suddenly, moments after I drifted off, a dark-figure woman burst out from the wall and screamed “I’M GOING WITH YOU!” I lay paralyzed as an icy wave rushed from my head to my feet and back up to burn in my chest. I felt like I had been entered and possessed, and it took a long while to convince my arm to reach up and find the light

switch. Without thinking, I gathered my blankets and my pillow and walked upstairs to the room where Alice [Sandahl, keyboard] was sleeping and crawled into bed with her like a little kid.

Hamburg

Graffiti in German cities looks like it’s straight out of the background of a old-school video game. If you’ve never been outside the United States (like me prior to La Luz), you might think taking a crap would be a universal experience, but it is truly amazing how many ways people have come up with to flush a toilet! The gentle indignity of groping around a tiny stall for a lever, chain, pedal, string, button, or motion-sensing electronic eye is often accompanied by an accented voice in my head that taunts: “Look at you! You fool! You don’t belong here!”

Stockholm

Geronimo’s is an American Southwest-themed bar. Animal hides, cow skulls, antlers, snake skins, and giant folk-art wicker thrones are placed beside ►

“So you guys are all female?” was actually a full question that expected an answer, and the follow-up “Are you trying to say something?” only made things worse.

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◀ black-and-white photos of Native Americans. The owner surveys the premises in a vintage suede jacket with four-inch fringe. We drank tequila and ate Swedish burritos (not bad) while the sound guy talked our ear off about American politics. He thought most of our problems would be solved if more power was given over to armed militias. It was strange to be so far from home and hanging out in this sort of home-themed setting. I felt like I was in the twilight zone. Scandinavian audiences are generally terrifyingly polite, and my few attempts to make mood-lightening jokes were met with silence and blank stares, though afterward people were really friendly. The hotel the venue booked for us looked swank from the outside so we all got excited, but inside it was like a really dirty M.C. Escher maze in which half-dressed men peered out from behind cracked doors.

Berlin

On the autobahn, cars go so fast that if you gaze across the lanes of opposing traffic to a cornfield or a thin forest of birch trees, you can't really see cars at all, just shadows, the slight glint of metal. I noticed that trick one day in the backseat and I became obsessed with making cars disappear, but told no one because it's terrifying.

St. Gallen, Switzerland

I saw a cow chasing a cyclist down a bike path.

Bologna

We followed the GPS to our accommodations for the night, which turned out to be three RVs on the outskirts of town. The local prostitutes dress like 1990s business ladies with a twist and hang out on small country roads looking like they are just confused about where a good place to catch a cab might be. We stopped for some pizza, and I heard someone say "Mama mia" immediately! We had some time after dinner and before we played, so we took a walk in the city center, which was full of amazing 12th-century buildings and hordes of chain-smoking teenagers. A few blocks in, the buildings parted to reveal an enthusiastic bell-bottomed song-and-dance performance of American disco classics and a laser light show.

Top Four Euro Strip-Club Names

- Go Go Night Dream
- Night 2000
- Black Shadow Lap Dance Club
- Midnight Emotions

A Day Off in the Scottish Countryside

Castles are real and everywhere. We stayed at a dreamy hippie enclave with a woman who looked like a forgotten member of the Incredible String Band. Will, our tour manager and my boyfriend, asked about a good place to take a stroll, and she recommended walking toward the ancient pagan stone circles.

"They're right over there, just hop over any fences," she said.
"Really, that's okay?" we asked.
"Yeah, this is Scotland, you have the right to roam. It's not like America where someone could come at you with a gun."

Amsterdam

The last show of our tour was at Paradiso, a beautiful old theater with a large venue downstairs and a smaller room upstairs where we played. Yo La Tengo was playing downstairs, and I noticed that Patti Smith was scheduled to play a show in honor of the

40th anniversary of *Horses* the next night. We had met Patti's guitarist, Lenny Kaye, a year ago in Oslo, where we were shocked to find him DJing our show, so I sent him an e-mail inviting him to catch our set. I didn't figure he'd get the message in time, but worth a try. The audience was happy and fun, the sound was fantastic, and I could see the monitor guy smiling and dancing in the corner of my eye the whole time. Afterward, the greenroom was full of friends, new and old. My best friend from elementary school showed up, the Dutch guy we rented our gear from, Sub Pop's resident Brit, and some of Yo La Tengo's crew came by. We had just popped open an end-of-tour celebratory bottle of champagne when Lenny Kaye walked in. After more than three months on the road, it was a real treat to experience the super happy *Wayne's World* ending where Mr. Big sees the video they beamed into his limo and shows up at the last minute! We talked about life on the road: the stress, the long boring drives, going months without seeing friends and family, and sleeping in strange places. Then Lenny said something I found strangely comforting: "But if you do it long enough, they'll write 'Musician' on your grave."

My Merch

Will plays keyboard with Shannon and the Clams, so after the La Luz dates were over, we stayed on and met up with them in London for a short run of dates. I've been touring pretty steadily for the last five years, but I've never traveled with a band I wasn't in, so I was interested to get a glimpse of touring life from the other side of the stage. Also, while I should have been exhausted after three solid months on the road, watching Shannon and the Clams play makes me feel like a hair-fisted 14-year-old at a Beatles show. On the road, La Luz eats fast and cheap: gas-station stuff, leftover greenroom snacks, and "scamwiches" (sandwiches made from the continental breakfast and snuck out of the dining room in a coat pocket or tote bag). The Clams, on the other hand, will full-on sit down at an Indian restaurant and get appetizers and entrées and end the meal with a cappuccino!

Shannon and I had just hit the dance floor after the Clams' set in Lille, France, when a girl who recognized me from the merch table ran up and pleaded with us in breathless, careful English: "Do not go to Paris tomorrow! Do not go! You cannot go! There is an attack!" Because the attacks were in progress, the news was hard to piece together at first. But later, locked to our phones, the magnitude of the night's horror became clear. I felt a nauseating mix of depression, rage, and hopelessness, familiar from mass shootings that had come before. The Clams felt bad about canceling, but in the end, it wasn't their call. The promoter for their Paris show had been killed at the Bataclan, and the venue, in the same neighborhood, would be closed.

Our last week we were in both France and Belgium as those nations struggled to piece together what happened and what might come next. I was planning my escape route wherever we went. In Lyon, they played a show on a small ship, and I screwed open a little porthole in the closet behind the merch table in case I had to dive into the Rhône. Yet there were big grateful crowds at both shows. "We need this right now. We need to be together," a woman told me with tears welling up. In Brussels, there were men with machine guns everywhere and army trucks like frozen dinosaurs dropped into the middle of market streets.

A few days later, after an intensive round of security checks, I boarded my flight in Amsterdam and finally headed home. ■

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MY PHILOSOPHY A COLUMN ABOUT HIPHOP AND CULTURE



BEST OF THE YEAR (Clockwise from top left) Thundercat, Mackned, DoNormaal, and Young Thug.

2015: Wrap It Up, B

BY LARRY MIZELL JR.

Black art thrives in times of revolution,” said Twitter user @infiniteideal earlier this month. (Note to corporations: Always give proper credit to black people for shit they put on the internet.) Hip-hop, a black art, pulsed with urgency and intent through the tumult of 2015—it wasn’t always revolutionary, but the best of it was all very fucking free.

Okay, the best show (possibly ever, really) was indeed D’Angelo at the Showbox. The best song: Thundercat’s “Them Changes.” The collaboration that ruined my best pants: Shabazz Palaces jumping in the pot with Flying Lotus and Thundercat as WOKE. The best rapper of 2015: Young Thug, obviously—the freest rapper on earth.

The best local hip-hop releases of 2015, presented in no particular order, because I hate hierarchal thinking: THEESatisfaction, *EarthEE*; Mackned, *Female*; SneakGua-po, *Konica*; Romaro Franceswa, *Balance*; DoNormaal, *Jump or Die*; Silas Blak, *Editorials (War Tunes)*; Malitia MaliMob, *ISIS*; Porter Ray, *Nightfall*; Raz Simone, *Macklemore Privilege & Chief on Keef Violence* and *Trap Spirituals*; Jarv Dee, *Satellites*, *Swishes & Spaceships*; OCnotes, *Color Wheel*.

(Oh yeah: I also include multiple entries and unreleased joints and plus there are 11 of them shits.)

Topping my list of favorite discoveries this year would be Seattle via Long Beach’s DoNormaal—it’s probably an easy comparison here, but her *Jump or Die* gave me the same excitement I had upon first hearing THEESatisfaction’s first releases: the thrill of possibilities. Dex Amora’s intimate, blissed-out basement vibes hark back—apropos given that he was literally raised in MPLS around the Rhymesayers familia. I

knew about Astro King Phoenix before, particularly from his video work, but this year he made a definitive statement with a collection of loosies and his *Aurum Silentium*. Tacoma crew :30 were an instant South Sound sensation when they dropped their *AM/PM* tape on Soundcloud.

The best national rap releases: Kendrick Lamar, *To Pimp a Butterfly*; Future, *Dirty Sprite 2* and *56 Nights*; Vince Staples, *Summer 06*; Young Thug, *Barter 6*, *Slime Season*, and *Slime Season 2*; Denzel Curry, *32 Zel/Planet Shrooms*; Rae Sremmurd, *Sremm Life*; Quelle Chris, *Innocent Country*; Earl Sweatshirt, *I Don’t Like Shit, I Don’t Go Outside*; Denmark Vessey, *Martin Lucid Dream*; Tef Poe, *War Machine 3*; Drake, *If You’re Reading This It’s Too Late* and *WATTB*.

It’s worth noting that Meek Mill actually made a record I liked, right before he got hit by a fuckin’ bus—now he dead. RIP, Meek Mill. JK—he’s doing just fine. Even though he learned, just like all

of us, that the once-set rules of credibility and authorship in hip-hop don’t really matter like that anymore (that all would’ve gone far differently in pre-internet days), Meek Milli still knows in his heart that the singin’ nigga who bodied him would still gladly trade places with him, *if only for one night* (c. Luther Vandross).

Lastly, I just wanna tell all of y’all making and appreciating music, turning up, being on the scene: Do me a favor and fucking take care of yourselves and each other. Everybody likes to party, but every party ends and has to get cleaned up. When this wave recedes, as they always always do, don’t get washed. (Hit my e-mail for more clichés.) ■

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ART



INCA Institute for New Connotative Action.

AERON BERGMAN / ALEJANDRA SALINAS

With Its New Show, Unstoppable, INCA Strives to Expand the Lexicon of Seattle's Art Conversation

BY JEN GRAVES

The Seattle art venue INCA used to be in a flimsy warehouse resembling a personal storage shed in Sodo. Today, it's housed in the prominent storefront of a corner brick building in Lower Queen Anne. The building had been a ruin for almost five years when INCA arrived a few months ago with the tools that laid the smooth concrete floor and uncovered the redwood beams of the original ceiling.

INCA, which focuses on language in and as art, specializes in transformations and translations.

The name INCA, standing for Institute for New Connotative Action, was intended to be "over-the-top serious," said INCA cofounder Alejandra Salinas. "But the idea was always to frame INCA the 'institute' as a parody that was also sincere in our mission."

"In the Quechua language, the term 'Inca' referred to the ruling class, not to everyone," said Salinas, who is from Spain. "So when the Spanish invaders arrived, they named the whole people Inca and the place the Inca Empire. This says more about the Spanish conquistadors than about the people who spoke Quechua. Language expresses power: The naming of things invents things."

Its next exhibition, *Unstoppable*, opens December 18, featuring materials and instructions for making low-cost DIY bullet-proof clothing in response to Black Lives Matter cofounder Patrisse Cullors's question "What would technology for black lives be?" The artists and activists Edxie Betts, micha cárdenas, Kiyomi Fujikawa, C. Davida Ingram, and Nikkita Oliver will lead a conversation about direct-action protection.

Salinas and cofounder Aeron Bergman are

artists who met, fell in love, and began collaborating at art school in Toronto in 1995. They've since shown their own work in sound, music, video, and performance—which is deserving of its own separate story—in many cities, including Berlin, Paris, Mexico City, New York, Tokyo, Bangkok, and Melbourne. Five years ago, they founded INCA in Detroit, Bergman's hometown. Two and a half years ago, after coming to

Seattle to teach at the University of Washington Bothell, they opened INCA Seattle, and they've mounted 22 exhibitions here.

INCA isn't like anything else in Seattle today. It's international but idiosyncratic. The shows represent a network of artists that Salinas and Bergman know through their years of living and teaching across the United States, Europe, and in the Palestinian city of Ramallah. In 2016, INCA will host a series of conversations with Seattle-area artists Max Kraushaar, Gretchen Bennett, Paul Berger, Rob Rhee, and Jessica Powers (and TARL), plus Seattle poet Melanie Noel (who curates a reading series in her grandmother's car), and Montreal-based writer Nasrin Himada.

Last October, the young New York video artist and performer Sondra Perry led a chanting public protest in the park across the street from INCA. Rather than give an artist talk, she invited the crowd of viewer/participants back into the gallery from the cold outdoors to talk among themselves about how to address racist police violence against the backdrop of her videos, stories that star and were coauthored by her actual extended family in Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

"INCA is a political space, but instead of generating statements, we create a space to

have conversations," Salinas said. "We think art always does this: the social life of the object."

Art objects are on display at INCA, but the emphasis is on ideas expressed in words and printed materials. In November, Salinas and Bergman organized the exhibition *Great Views*, a retrospective of Konsthall 323, an art institution housed in a series of small four-seater cars.

Konsthall 323 was created in 2010 by Frida Krohn and Ylva Trapp, two artists who studied with Salinas and Bergman when they taught in Stockholm. *Great Views* included color photographs of the three Konsthall 323 locations thus far: a blue Mazda 323, a red Volkswagen Golf, and the rented black Ford Fiesta they used as their museum-car while they were in Seattle, hosting two visitors at a time for rides and discussions. Earlier shows had also included the actual display of art resting on the dashboard, leaning against the stick shift, et cetera. Coffee and cookies were always provided, because every art institution has its cafe aspect.

Salinas and Bergman run the space mostly on their teaching salaries "and lots of hustle. But INCA works only because of the generosity of friends, allies, and strangers who believe in and understand the project." It's open four days a week now, and the landlords of INCA's current home, Raj and Akhil Shah (and building manager Bobby Frank), have donated the space to the artists for at least one more year—they believe in and understand the project.

"We wanted to create this space that had this... affection," Salinas said, while she and Bergman sat in INCA's window on a recent early evening.

INCA is "a very personal project," Bergman added.

"Connotative action," they explained, takes place somewhere in the hazy territory of collective consciousness, within the sticky web where your brain meets all the other brains that speak its language. Connotative is opposed to denotative. The denotative meanings of a word are literal. Connotative meanings are the word's associations, all those feelings and references and impressions that come up when you hear it. Synonyms mean the same thing (denotatively) but they connote differently; their shades differ, which is why we struggle to pick the right one, to manipulate the terms.

"Language is used as a tool for oppression and willful ignorance: Stephen Colbert's joke about 'truthiness' pointed this out for the millionth time," Salinas explained.

Yes, and language also comes out of haphazardly individual mouths, which is why INCA is, in equal measure, intellectual and personal. (Microsoft Word synonyms for personal: private, own, special, peculiar, delicate, subjective, respective, intimate, not public. Antonym: public.)

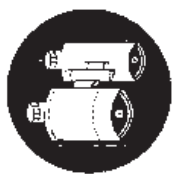
I asked Bergman and Salinas why they collaborated as artists in the first place. They were giving me a ride to the bus stop in their car in between appointments. She was eight months pregnant with their first child, a daughter. They were both in the front seat.

Bergman: "Any female artist anywhere has to deal right away with the myth of the artist because it's Picasso, it's... male genius—"

Salinas: "Yes, and it hasn't died."

Bergman: "So an artist duo immediately complicates that."

Salinas: "There's no such thing as a lone genius sitting in a vacuum... Many people work the same way, but the market picks one guy to represent all of it. Jan Verwoert calls that the 'Who's the Man' problem. It's never about one person, one nationality, or one gender... But really, it started by accident, because we met so young, and we loved each other." ■



THEATER



DAVID BELISLE

DINA MARTINA *Enduringly brilliant, grim, and beastly.*

The Stranger's Christmas Review Revue!

Reviews of *The Nutcracker*, *SnowGlobed*, *For Christmas*, and the *Dina Martina Christmas Show*

Dina Martina Christmas Show

Re-bar, through Dec 31

Reviewed by Christopher Frizzelle

How Many Stars Jesus Would Give It:
★★★★★

What It's Like: Dina Martina has been performing in Seattle for 27 years, and somehow, against the odds, she gets better with time. "Compliments of the season to you and yours! He is risen. Christ is risen. I'm lovin' it," she says, pumping the air with a raise-the-roof gesture, a poinsettia attached to her Madonna-like head mic. "Oh, did you see that fly?" she asked, as a fly that would not leave her alone swooped in front of her face. "That's Derek. He's always stealing spotlights." And then she went off on what had to be an entirely ad-libbed jag about Derek the fly, fabled house fly at Re-bar, concluding with a sad story about finding him dead on a windowsill last year. "He was flat and lifeless, but everyone told me he's back! He's back!" Watching Dina Martina riff on the holidays and reincarnation is like being served a delicious vat of clichés au gratin. You'd think the chubby-older-woman-with-a-hairy-back-and-no-talent-but-thinks-she's-God's-gift-to-singing shtick would get old, but it doesn't, because Grady West, who inhabits her horrible fashion choices, is a world-class artist, a first-rate writer, and a comedy genius. (He has a Stranger Genius Award.) There's something so enduringly brilliant about Dina's incurably bonkers self-empowerment, but also something grim and beastly about who she would be without it. I saw the *Dina Martina Christmas Show* with someone who hadn't seen a Dina show in a decade, and she couldn't believe how much funnier it was than she remembered.

What It Looks Like: Gilded trash.

Best Moment in the Show: The cover of

"Sailing" by Christopher Cross, rewritten to be "Sleighting," all transcendent smugness and wistful warmth and cozy blankness.



ANGELA STERLING

The Nutcracker

McCaw Hall, through Dec 28

Reviewed by Rich Smith

How Many Stars Jesus Would Give It:
★★★★

What It's Like: Watching *The Nutcracker* is like watching NASCAR. Lots of colors, everyone is dancing around in a circle, and the whole time you're thinking, "Oh my god, one of those dancers is going to crash into another one and there's going to be a sugar-plum explosion." Perhaps you can tell I'd never seen *The Nutcracker* before. For my mother, Christmas was a pagan holiday and thus an insult to Christ Our King. But this ballet is one of the craziest things I've ever seen. I mean, the ballet goes into this little girl's dream, wherein there's a war with a many-headed rat king who ends up dying dramatically after the girl throws her handkerchief at him. But what's fucked up ►



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SNOWGLOBED Short plays about hating the wealthy.

◀ is that a nutcracker steals one of the rat king's crowns, places it on the girl's head, and then she transforms into a bunch of adult snowflake ballerinas with crowns on! And THEN it turns out that the nutcracker transforms into her childhood crush! The two walk hand-in-hand toward a giant exploding star, which ends up being a portal into a 45-minute Katy Perry video filled with dancing desserts and a glittery peacock that moves like a sexy broken river. These images don't form the foundation of my childhood memories, and that depresses me greatly.

What It Looks Like: The big news with this *Nutcracker* is that Pacific Northwest Ballet replaced Maurice Sendak's beloved pastel set with a brighter one by Ian Falconer, author of the Olivia the pig children's book series and longtime set designer. The symmetry of Falconer's *Nutcracker* set would be obscure if it weren't for thick cartoonish lines and Dr. Seuss-like stage elements. It's hard not to see Wes Anderson's influence, but Falconer leaves his own distinctive marks all over the place. The performance begins, for example, with a cinematic video that takes the perspective of a bird that flies over a snowy village and swoops down to the doorstep of the mansion where the action is set. We pass through the double doors and meet Clara, who wears Olivia the pig's trademark candy-cane stripes. A rococo frame frames another rococo frame that frames the living-room scene, emphasizing the ballet's multilayered fever-dream narrative.

Best Moment in the Show: There's probably nothing more beautiful than watching ballerina snowflakes dancing like snowflakes as snowflakes fall upon them in a snowy wood. But I love the stiff, athletic dance of the harlequin dolls. So it's a tie.

SnowGlobed

West of Lenin, through Dec 19
Reviewed by Rich Smith

How Many Stars Jesus Would Give It: ★★★
What It's Like: Distrust of and hatred for the wealthy thematically unites this evening of short plays. The first couple of plays—one about a divorced couple trying to split Christmas and the other about the sad life of a Christmastide evergreen—were basically *SNL* bits that didn't escalate quickly enough. After the slow start, though, the company really brought it.

Best Moment in the Show: This is a toss-up between two of the shorts. "White Kwanzaa (an appropriation comedy)" by Nicky Davis

was straight-up gold. Two misguided white couples celebrate Kwanzaa. They listen and dance to hip-hop, decorate their house with "traditional African" cornucopias, and claim to have cooked the celebratory meal using recipes from a cookbook called *Little Sambo's Kitchen*. The satire here is spot-on and timely, considering we still live in an era when Yale professors think it's okay for people to run around on Halloween wearing another culture as their costume. But Kelleen Conway Blanchard's "Rats and Roaches" was the best 10 minutes of theater I witnessed all evening. The premise was pretty familiar: Three British street urchins catch rats and roaches at a "home for unwanted children" for a Fagin-like person named Slevil. But Blanchard freshens up this *Oliver Twist*-type story with hilarious language and plenty of imaginative punch—a skinny Santa, for instance, ends up leading a gang of alligators in

an effort to avenge the dispossessed.

Okay, but Actually the Best Moment in the Show: When the young white couples in "White Kwanzaa" start revealing deep-seated racism by "accidentally" saying the n-word.

For Christmas

West of Lenin, through Dec 20
Reviewed by Rich Smith

How Many Stars Jesus Would Give It: ★

What It's Like: This one's a real, um, Christmas (🎄). Act I: Santa and Jesus try to move a couch through a door. This nonissue is as boring and unrevealing of the characters as it sounds. Act II: Jesus and Santa play a drunken card game to determine who will win Christmas. My notes about the script: "If I have to watch two people drink and make bad jokes about Henry Weinhard's beer and have a stilted, half-remembered conversation about nothing for another minute, I'm going to scream." I did not scream, but trying not to do so was a chore.

What It Looks Like: A small audience (the area holds only 15 people) sits on boxes and trunks lined along the walls. The stage and seating situation, designed by Kasia Rozanska, makes sense considering the plot of Nick Edwards's script, but that's where the sense-making ends in this deeply boring and at times objectionable play.

Best Moment in the Show: When it was over. ■

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STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS Those TIE fighters are real death traps.

Thank the Maker! Someone Finally Made a Star Wars Movie for People Who Love Star Wars

BY CHARLES MUDEDE

The first question must be answered right away: Yes, I very much enjoyed J.J. Abrams's remix of George Lucas's *Star Wars* and Irvin Kershner's *The Empire Strikes Back* (with only a dash of Richard Marquand's *Return of the Jedi*), and so will you, if you have any affection left for the original films.

In fact, I enjoyed *Star Wars: The Force*

Awakens more than I thought I would. It has it all. Great bad dialogue, stunning special effects, and good performances from the principals: Daisy Ridley, who reboots Luke Skywalker in the character of Rey, and John Boyega, who plays Finn, a stormtrooper who can no longer stomach the evil of the Dark Side.

Harrison Ford, who returns as a very old

but weirdly not tired Han Solo, has great interactions with Boyega. The chemistry between these two gives the movie its heart, its human warmth, its moments of galactic magic. Han Solo knows a thing or two about falling in love with a member of the galaxy's elite, and he happily provides advice to Finn, who is cosmically attracted to Rey, a future Jedi.

The Force Awakens does not offer much of a new story but simply and brilliantly retells much of the old one. It's also very faithful to the images, the technologies, the economy, and the wardrobe of the founding films in the *Star Wars* series. Indeed, the more you know about the first three films, the more pleasure you will get out of *The Force Awakens*. And maybe calling it a remix is not a strong enough expression—maybe we should call it a dub, in the Jamaican reggae sense. A remix essentially makes improvements on the past; a dub makes a ghost out of the past. And there are lots of ghostly elements in *The*

Force Awakens. There are the ghosts of the old characters, the theology, the interstellar robot market—and, most brilliantly, the ghosts of the Star Destroyers that crashed on the desert planet. Dub is very close to the root of this work. King Tubby would have loved Abrams's version. Indeed, there is even a little reggae dub near the middle of the movie.

While watching *The Force Awakens*, I had a Proustian moment. Early in *Remembrance of Things Past*, the narrator, Marcel, eats a little cake, a madeleine, and it awakens in him a forgotten experience of his youth. My

***The Force Awakens*
does not offer much of a
new story but simply and
brilliantly retells much of
the old one.**

Proustian experience happened when Rey and Finn entered Han Solo's spacecraft, the rusty, dusty, rattly *Millennium Falcon*. At that moment, I suddenly smelled the stick of chewing gum that came with the *Star Wars* cards I collected and traded as a boy. I spent a minor fortune on these cards, because buying a few just would not do. You needed to buy lots and lots of them to get your hands on the few rare ones. I was a fiend. I stole coins from the bottom of my mother's purse, and no couch cushion was safe from my desperation. Those cards meant everything to me. I even recalled the rubber bands I used to organize my collection into rare sets and common ones.

Almost 40 years have passed, and yet the exact smell was still in my head. I had no idea it was there. None. Clearly, your past only goes when you go. And what I'm taking to the grave are the images of those cards: Princess Leia captured, space pirate Han Solo, stormtroopers seeking the droid, a horrified Luke finds his family killed. These old images matched the ones on the screen. There was harmony between the two. It was the same galaxy, the same characters, the same music.

J.J. Abrams has succeeded where George Lucas failed: He has remembered what made *Star Wars* good in the first place. ■

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It's A Wonderful Life," showing at the Grand Illusion Cinema through December 30th. The 8:30pm show on Thursday, December 17th is free for everyone.

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**Where to Go
for What to Do**

The Danish Girl Fails to Strike a Blow Against Hollywood's Heteronormative Hegemony

BY KATHY FENNESSY

Not every fact-based LGBT story has to have a happy ending. Things didn't end well for Brandon Teena in Kimberly Peirce's *Boys Don't Cry*, but his fate illustrated the resistance transgender individuals have had to face just for trying to live their authentic lives.

The problem with *The Danish Girl* isn't that a sad fate also befell Lili Elbe (Eddie Redmayne) but that director Tom Hooper (*The King's Speech*, *Les Misérables*) twists himself into knots to present her journey as the stuff of inspiration and uplift. Then again, he chose not to draw from Niels Hoyer's 1933 biography *Man into Woman*, but from David Ebershoff's 2000 novel *The Danish Girl*. So it's a literary adaptation rather than a biopic, but as is often the case in these sorts of instances, the true story was more fascinating.

The film begins in Copenhagen in 1926, with landscape painter Einar Wegener enjoying a congenial marriage to portrait painter Gerda (*Ex Machina*'s Alicia Vikander). Though Gerda's work hasn't found as much favor as Einar's, he supports her unreservedly. When he creates a female persona called Lili, she does the same for him. At first it's an experiment, a way to get in touch with his feminine side, but as Lili becomes real and



THE DANISH GIRL *Heteronormative?*

Einar becomes the construct, Gerda sticks by her. It's a lovely story, except it isn't true.

By focusing so intently on gender, the film dances around sexual orientation, because that would complicate the message that true love transcends such earthly concerns. And so Einar and Gerda spend most of the film as a married couple until, all of a sudden, they're not. Lucinda Coxon's script, which becomes maddeningly vague when faced with anything that would tarnish the fantasy, suggests an amicable divorce in which the two

remained close. In truth, the marriage was annulled and they drifted apart, though some real-life couples have had better luck.

The real Gerda was attracted to both genders, but her cinematic analogue prefers men, particularly Lili's childhood friend Hans (Matthias Schoenaerts). The shy, retiring Lili, meanwhile, appears devoid of sexual desires, and she even balks when fellow painter Henrik (Ben Whishaw), who "reads" her as a gay man rather than a straight woman, makes a pass at her.

But she perseveres, and a German surgeon (Sebastian Koch from *The Lives of Others*) helps Lili to complete her physical transformation. That should be the inspirational part, except the director and the story are at cross purposes, because afterward, Lili, now living in Paris, stops going out and stops painting. She probably stopped making money, too, but that's yet another complicating factor in which the director has no interest. The vivacious Gerda becomes an art-world star, while the sweet, sad Lili becomes a virtual recluse. That's hardly uplifting, especially in light of the final sequence in which the focus shifts from the transgender heroine to Gerda and Hans, her cisgender support system.

The real Lili Elbe deserves credit for forging ahead where few before her had gone, but Hooper's decision to leave out crucial details feels more dishonest than respectful (and if he really wanted to strike a blow against Hollywood's heteronormative hegemony, he would have hired a transgender actor to play her). Instead, she comes across as a symbol, which is not insignificant, but in Hilary Swank's performance, Brandon Teena was a human being first and foremost—a human being who deserved better from life than he got. Lili, in turn, deserves better than the pretty, pastel treatment Hooper has applied to her life. ■

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CHOW



MAKINI HOWELL Working for Stevie Wonder forced her to push back the opening of her vegan sweet shop by several months.

ANGEL CEBALLOS

The Highs and Lows of Being Stevie Wonder's Personal Touring Chef

Local Chef Makini Howell Jumped at a Once-in-a-Lifetime Opportunity, but Running Her Business from the Road Was More Difficult Than She Anticipated

BY ANGELA GARBES

Last December, Stevie Wonder came to Seattle's KeyArena to perform his legendary double album *Songs in the Key of Life*. I stopped going to church a long time ago, but the show felt something like that: thousands of people singing Wonder's revelatory songs about love, unity, and justice, in unison. It was life affirming.

For local chef Makini Howell, who operates four vegan businesses under the umbrella name of Plum Restaurants, Wonder's appearance in Seattle was actually life changing. Before he left town, Wonder, who has been vegan for several years, had lunch at Howell's Capitol Hill restaurant, Plum Bistro.

"Black SUVs pulled up outside of the building, and out walked the man himself," recalls Howell. "He said he was hungry, so I just made him a little bit of everything." After the meal, Wonder asked Howell to sit down with him. She was palpably nervous.

"He said, 'Makini, girl, look at me when I'm talking to you.' He loves saying that to people," Howell says, laughing. Wonder thanked her for the meal and then left. She figured that was the end of it.

A couple of months later, though, Wonder invited Howell to fly to California, where he interviewed her and asked her to be his personal chef for the remainder of his tour. Howell remembers Wonder telling her, "You are young and black and have talent. We should support each other." He also told her that the next leg of the tour would have her on the road for 45 days—and that she had three days to be ready.

In addition to Plum Bistro, Howell also owns Plum Burgers, a food truck; Plum Pantry, a quick-service restaurant in Seattle Center; and Sugarplum, a sweets shop on Capitol Hill. Leaving town for so long, she realized, would affect her businesses. But she never considered not doing it.

"Oh, hell no," she says. "It's Stevie Wonder."

And so, for the better part of the last eight months, Howell was on the road traveling with a musician she grew up adoring. Every day she cooked his meals in hotel kitchens and venues across the country. When I talked to her last month, she was in Oklahoma City, about to make a portobello mushroom Caesar salad, lentil soup, and a fruit smoothie for Wonder's lunch. She also planned to make him a brownie for dessert, as well as some popcorn for a snack on the tour bus.

"Stevie Wonder is definitely a breakfast-lunch-dinner-dessert-and-treat man," says Howell. "He's like, 'Give it all to me.'" While Wonder craves her sweets, he hasn't been as big a fan of other items she's made for him. "I pickled some watermelon radishes and served them to him once," she recalls. "And he was like, 'Makini, please don't do that again.'"

Howell says that working for Wonder is "kind of like working for the Buddha. He's kind and he's patient. He cares about ►

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◀genuineness, love, and music—and spreading what he truly feels.” When recalling the watermelon-radish incident, Howell says, “He never demeans a person. He just gives gentle, clear direction.”

The day-to-day working life on tour, though, was grueling. Shows ran late, and when there was a 5 a.m. wake-up call the next morning, breakfast had to be ready well before that so the whole entourage could leave on schedule. Some nights she didn't sleep. “I'm definitely not trying to be a touring celebrity chef,” Howell says. “I just like working for him.”

While Howell has enjoyed some definite perks that come with working with a legendary and beloved musician (she puts meeting Oprah Winfrey high on that list), the opportunity also created real problems for her business.

A month after Howell left town for tour, four of her employees—including Plum Bistro's pastry chef and accountant—gave their notice. According to Howell, some said they resented working behind the scenes while she received credit, without even being

“Stevie Wonder is definitely a breakfast-lunch-dinner-dessert-and-treat man.”

around. “That was really hard,” she says.

Additionally, being absent from the business crippled her ability to open Sugarplum, a sweet shop serving vegan soft-serve ice cream, sundaes, floats, milkshakes, cookies, cakes, and pies. Howell had funded the business by securing 166 investors via a Community Sourced Capital campaign, and she knew they were expecting her to deliver on her business plan.

Sugarplum was scheduled to open in May, but because she wasn't around, she had to keep pushing back the opening date. While restaurant opening dates are notoriously flexible, Howell had signed a confidentiality agreement with Wonder's management, so she couldn't tell anyone the real reason for the long delay. “I looked like a fuckup,” Howell says. “It was frustrating. It looked like I was slipping, but I was actually touring and working.”

Sugarplum finally opened its doors at the end of September, missing months of what Howell had hoped would be strong sales during one of Seattle's hottest summers. Instead, in the cold weather, it's gotten off to a slow start. Now that she's home, she's focusing her attention on the dessert shop. “It's too good a concept to let it slip any more,” she says. She adds that Wonder, who came to Sugarplum's grand opening, loves the soft-serve.

Despite the staffing changes at Plum, Howell says her current team—including Maria Torres, who, along with her husband, Ramon, has worked for Howell for almost 10 years, as well as the longtime crew that runs the Plum Burgers truck—is strong. “The reason I've been able to do all this,” she says, “is because of them.”

Being so close to Wonder—someone who, at 65 years old, can fill 20,000-seat arenas with people who know all the words to songs he wrote more than 40 years ago—has taught Howell that “to be relevant, no matter after so many years, it's all about being dedicated, practiced, and hardworking.”

The warmth she saw Wonder give and receive over the last few months has also left her pondering many things. “Do I have enough time left in my life to matter [so much] to people? I'm sure as hell going to keep trying.” ■

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY
BY ROB BREZSNY

For the Week of December 16

ARIES (March 21–April 19): Neanderthals were a different human species that coexisted with our Homo sapiens ancestors for at least 5,000 years. But they eventually died out while our people thrived. Why? One reason, says science writer Marcus Chown, is that we alone invented sewing needles. Our newborn babies had well-made clothes to keep them warm and healthy through frigid winters. Neanderthal infants, covered with ill-fitting animal skins, had a lower survival rate. Chown suggests that although this provided us with a mere 1 percent survival advantage, that turned out to be significant. I think you’re ready to find and use a small yet ultimately crucial edge like that over your competitors, Aries.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20): Artist Robert Barry created *30 Pieces*, an installation that consisted of pieces of paper on which he had typed the following statement: “Something which is very near in place and time, but not yet known to me.” According to my reading of the astrological omens, this theme captures the spirit of the phase you’re now entering. But I think it will evolve in the coming weeks. First it’ll be “Something which is very near in place and time, and is becoming known to me.” By mid-January it could turn into “Something which is very near and dear, and has become known to me.”

GEMINI (May 21–June 20): “There is in every one of us, even those who seem to be most moderate, a type of desire that is uncanny, wild, and lawless.” Greek philosopher Plato wrote that in his book *The Republic*, and I’m bringing it to your attention just in time for your Season of Awakening and Deepening Desire. The coming days will be a time when you can, if you choose, more fully tune in to the uncanny, wild, and lawless aspects of your primal yearnings. But wait a minute! I’m not suggesting you should immediately take action to gratify them. For now, just feel them and observe them. Find out what they have to teach you.

CANCER (June 21–July 22): Congratulations! You have broken all your previous records for doing boring tasks that are good for you. On behalf of the other 11 signs, I thank you for your heroic, if unexciting, campaign of self-improvement. You have not only purified your emotional resources and cleared out some breathing room for yourself, but you have also made it easier for people to help you and feel close to you. Your duty has not yet been completed, however. There are a few more details to take care of before the gods of healthy tedium will be finished with you. But start looking for signs of your big chance to make a break for freedom. They’ll arrive soon.

LEO (July 23–Aug 22): The English word “fluke” means “lucky stroke.” It was originally used in the game of billiards when a player made a good shot that he or she wasn’t even trying to accomplish. Later its definition expanded to include any fortuitous event that happens by chance rather than because of skill: good fortune generated accidentally. I suspect that you are about to be the beneficiary of what may seem to be a series of flukes, Leo. In at least one case, though, your lucky break will have been earned by the steady work you’ve done without any fanfare.

VIRGO (Aug 23–Sept 22): You may not have to use a literal crowbar in the coming weeks, but this rough tool will serve you well as a metaphor. Wherever you go, imagine that you’ve got one with you. Why? It’s time to jimmy open glued-shut portals, to pry loose mental blocks, to coax unyielding influences to budge, to nudge intransigent people free of their fixations. Anything that is stuck or jammed needs to get unstuck or unjammed through the power of your willful intervention.

LIBRA (Sept 23–Oct 22): The coming weeks will be a favorable time for you to consort with hidden depths and unknown riches. Cultivate a more conscious connection with the core resources you sometimes take for granted. This is one time when delving into the darkness can lead you to pleasure and treasure. As you explore, keep in mind this advice from author T. Harv Eker: “In every forest, on every farm, in every orchard on earth, what’s under the ground creates what’s above the ground. That’s why placing your attention on the fruits you have already grown is futile. You can’t change the fruits that are already hanging on the tree. But you can change tomorrow’s fruits. To do so, you will have to dig below the ground and strengthen the roots.”

SCORPIO (Oct 23–Nov 21): In the coming weeks, the pursuit of pleasure could drain your creative powers, diminish your collaborative possibilities, and wear you out. But it’s also possible that the pursuit of pleasure will enhance your creative powers, synergize your alliances, and lead you to new opportunities. Which way will you go? It all depends on the kinds of pleasures you pursue. The dumb, numbing, mediocre type will shrink your soul. The smart, intriguing, invigorating variety will expand your mind. Got all that? Say “Hell, no” to trivializing decadence so you can say “Wow, yes” to uplifting bliss.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22–Dec 21): Garnets are considered less valuable than diamonds. But out in the wild, there’s an intimate connection between these two gemstones. Wherever you find garnets near the surface of the earth, you can be reasonably sure that diamonds are buried deeper down in the same location. Let’s use this relationship as a metaphor for your life, Sagittarius. I suspect you have recently chanced upon a metaphorical version of garnets, or will do so soon. Maybe you should make plans to search for the bigger treasure toward which they point the way.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22–Jan 19): Ready for the Cool Anger Contest? You can earn maximum points by expressing your dissatisfaction in ways that generate the most constructive transformations. Bonus points will be awarded for your ability to tactfully articulate complicated feelings, as well as for your emotionally intelligent analyses that inspire people to respond empathetically rather than defensively. What are the prizes? First prize is a breakthrough in your relationship with an ally who could be crucial to your expansion in 2016. Second prize is a liberation from one of your limiting beliefs.

AQUARIUS (Jan 20–Feb 18): A fourth-century monk named Martin was a pioneer winemaker in France. He founded the Marmoutier Abbey and planted vineyards on the surrounding land. According to legend, Martin’s donkey had a crucial role in lifting viticulture out of its primitive state. Midway through one growing season, the beast escaped its tether and nibbled on a lot of the grapevines. All the monks freaked out, fearing that the crop was wrecked. But ultimately the grapes grew better than they had in previous years, and the wine they produced was fabulous. Thus was born the practice of pruning, which became de rigueur for all grape growers. What’s your equivalent of Martin’s donkey, Aquarius? I bet it’ll exert its influence very soon.

PISCES (Feb 19–March 20): “The deepest urge in human nature is the desire to be important,” said educator John Dewey. If that’s true, Pisces, you are on the verge of having your deepest urge fulfilled more than it has been in a long time. The astrological alignments suggest that you are reaching the peak of your value to other people. You’re unusually likely to be seen and appreciated and acknowledged for who you really are. If you have been underestimating your worth, I doubt you will be able to continue doing so. Here’s your homework: Take a realistic inventory of the ways your life has had a positive impact on the lives of people you have known. ■

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PERSON OF INTEREST

Jesus Christ

Son of God

Jesus Christ, photographed at Oddfellows West Hall.

BY KELLY O

You're one of the many stars in *Homo for the Holidays*. Hang on—Jesus, are you gay?

Yup, you hit the nail on the head with that one, so to speak.

What's the best part of being gay during the holidays?

Spending time with my chosen family, of course! Bringing everyone together around the supper table to drink wine and break bread is such a delight.

Has your dad ever given you any advice about being gay?

Well, he's never *explicitly* given me advice about it, but he has taught me so much about being a good person (or prophet, as the case may be). Going about the world with love and forgiveness will get you pretty far.

Is it a lot of pressure, you know, being the reason for the season?

Oh, not at all! I mean, it's all I've ever known, so it's just what I do. Still, each year I work on improving myself as a role model—being open to change, speaking out for those who cannot, and asking myself "What would I do?" As crosses to bear go, it's really not that bad!

Jesus (who looks a lot like dancer/choreographer ilvs strauss) performs in Homo for Holidays through December 27 at Oddfellows West Hall.



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